COUÉ FOR CHILDREN

GERTRUDE MAYO

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COUÉ FOR CHILDREN

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EMILE COUÉ

COUÉ FOR CHILDREN

BY

GERTRUDE MAYO

WITH A PREFACE
BY
EMILE COUE

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1923

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PREFACE BY EMILE COUÉ

About ten years ago Mlle. Kaufmant came to me as a patient, but as she later admitted to me, lacking in faith. It seemed to her that there was something like charlatanism in what I was doing.

But from the very first day she was converted and profiting by my councils she made rapid progress toward the relief she had hitherto sought in vain. Filled with my ideas and desiring to do as much good as possible for others, she asked to become my disciple and little by little she became capable of treating patients as successfully as I myself could.

As she felt herself especially drawn toward children she cared for them with all the tenderness of a mother, and I have seen her obtaining the most extraordinary results with poor little sick children, in the most desperate conditions—who under her beneficent influence were brought back to health.

It is a pleasure to give this recognition to Mlle. Kaufmant's work—and to say that she can ren-

der a very great service by working in hospitals for children.

EMILE COUÉ

On board *S.S. Majestic.*

ON BOARD S.S. Majestic

Il y a environ dix ans, Mademoiselle Hanfmann vint me trouver comme malade, mais, comme elle me l'a avoué plus tard, avec une certaine défiance. Elle pensait que ce que je pouvais avait quelque peu au charlatanisme. Mais le premier jour, elle fut conquise et, profitant de mes conseils, elle obtint rapidement des résultats qu'elle ne vous cherchés jusque-là. Pleine de mes idées, désirant faire bien le plus de bien possible, elle me demanda de devenir ma disciple et peu à peu, elle fut capable d'obtenir les mêmes résultats que moi.

Comme elle se sentait attirée vers les enfants, elle les soignait avec la tendresse d'une mère et je la vis obtenir les résultats

FAC-SIMILE OF PREFACE BY EMILE COUÉ

les plus extraordinaires sur le pauvre petits malades dont l'état semblait désespéré et qui, sous son influence bienfaisante, arrivaient à recouvrer la santé.

Je me plais à reconnaître M. Odin qu'elle pourrait rendre les plus grands services dans un hôpital d'enfants.

E. Comé

3 Janvier 1923

INTRODUCTION

THOSE who have seen Emile Coué will agree that he is in himself the best endorsement of the value of his own method. He is simple, he is kind, he is strong, he is brave, he is happy—and he offers to teach us to become all of these things—assuring us that he himself is in no way extraordinary.

He says that others can teach the method of auto-suggestion as well as he if only (and what an if!) they possess absolute conviction and a deep unselfish love for their fellow beings. No disciple of M. Coué has ever come nearer to realizing these ideal qualifications than Mlle. Marie Kaufmant, his earliest pupil.

Mlle. Kaufmant came to the house in the rue Jeanne d'Arc to a clinic. She saw there a man working for the good of others without heed of recognition or recompense. Her mind was simple and fresh and it was there that it received its first profound impression. She accepted the principles of auto-suggestion as beautiful and "Christlike"—making them an integral part of

her fervent religious faith. In addition she had a passionate and instinctive love for children, combined with a sweet, unselfish nature.

When the opportunity came to help with the children's clinic it was as though all the forces of her life-current, spiritual and physical, had found an outlet through this one channel. With the faith that can "remove mountains" and the love "which passeth knowledge" she entered upon her life work. The results she has obtained in treating children have amazed and mystified even M. Coué himself.

If this little book, in which I attempt to describe something of what I have seen at Nancy, gives courage and inspiration to any mother who is hoping to teach conscious auto-suggestion to her children, it will have served its purpose.

GERTRUDE MAYO

NEW YORK,
February 26, 1923

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COUÉ FOR CHILDREN

COUÉ FOR CHILDREN

CHAPTER I

THE CLINIC OF HAPPY CHILDREN

All the world has heard of M. Coué and his clinic at Nancy. Many graphic descriptions have been published of the scenes that take place there, so the account of my first visit will be very brief. The purpose of this book is to describe a department of the work concerning which very little has as yet been written.

In the little upstairs room in the garden cottage I first found the clinic. My initial sensation as I looked about me was one of guilt that I should be occupying one of the coveted chairs without any disease in the least worthy of attention. So many people were evidently suffering: that woman with black melancholia written on her face: that English officer they had carried up and deposited helpless in a chair. He was para-

lyzed in his arm and on one side, and his face expressed a desperate obstinacy. Then there were asthmatics, neurasthenics, cripples of all sorts and many nationalities. We glanced furtively at one another with a shy distrust and curiosity. I noticed particularly a dyspeptic-looking American business man who was very self-conscious. His supercilious smile seemed to be meant to indicate to all about him that he was there through no weakness of his own—but only to gratify his wife's whim.

Presently in the doorway M. Coué appeared, smiling and cheerful, rolling one of his little cigarettes of Maryland, and the clinic was on.

He took a few steps into the circle, stopping suddenly at point, as one might say, with a sharp thrust of his little goatee, "And how are you today, Madame?" The woman addressed admitted rather grudgingly that she was better but added that her attack was not due until the next day. M. Coué stamped his foot with comic indignation—"*Madame à sa crise arrangee d'avancc. Qu'est-ce que je peux faire alors!* It will come just as she has planned it." It was funny and every one laughed, including the patient who was

being scolded. There is never any sting in M. Coué's sarcasms.

The paralyzed English officer had no progress to report, but said he had "confidence" and it sounded infinitely pathetic. Then there was a short, sharp encounter with a young man who stammered very badly, from which M. Coué emerged victorious amid a murmur of applause. "I have no longer any fear. I am cured," said the young man, with an odd look of bewilderment.

One or two women handed him slips of paper on which the nature of their illnesses were written—and an old American lady said that her toes were getting crooked and giving her pain. "I felicitate you," said M. Coué with a very polite bow when she told him that she was seventy-nine years old.

Not until the end did the really dramatic incidents come. A rugged old type of Lorraine peasant woman said that her right arm and shoulder had been helpless from rheumatism for many years and she was in constant pain. *"A la bonne heure,"* cried M. Coué gaily. "Here we have a real person with a real pain!" He drew her into

the middle of the room, bade her shut her eyes and repeat with him the *ça passe* formula—"Zaba, Zaba, Zaba." They buzzed in unison and it went so fast one could not hear the words while M. Coué, standing behind her and stroking her back, looked as though he were winding up a mechanical toy.

Then a short, sharp command: "Now think *'I Can.'* Lift up your arm!" And up it went—half way—but there it halted and there was a grimace of pain on the poor old wrinkled face. "Hold it there," M. Coué ordered. Again the whirring *ça passe* and the winding-up process. This time not only did her arm go straight up in the air, but it came down again, feebly at first, then with increasingly forceful whacks on M. Coué's solid shoulder.

The old woman laughed aloud with pride and joy in her own prowess—M. Coué laughed, too, and we all laughed with her and with each other. There was a gust of handclapping. For that moment we had forgotten ourselves; all our hopes and sympathies had been merged in that old peasant woman's battle for self-mastery. The dyspeptic American had lost his supercilious

smile and was bending forward eagerly. The victim of melancholia was clapping encouragement. And the old American lady—well, I am sure she was not thinking of the crimps in her toes at that instant any more than I was thinking about the troubles I didn't have.

Chips and sparks were flying all about as M. Coué chiselled away at the incrustations and crystallizations of life-times on the human mind. He was a sculptor working on hard material. His blows were short and sharp. "You see that I am right—you cannot because you think 'I cannot.' Think always 'I can.' "

The next drama was enacted with an old blacksmith who laid down his crutches timorously and took a few faltering steps, which soon became a walk and then a shuffling dog-trot as M. Coué chased him about the circle like a terrier barking at his heels. Amid another burst of applause the old man looked over his shoulder a little ruefully at his pursuer. "This is all very well here, M. Coué, where you have the *Bon Dieu* to help you, but just wait till I get home and the Devil will be waiting to get back into my legs." "No, no," cried Coué, laughing; "I have shown you

how to drive him out once and you can do it again."

Then we all closed our eyes obediently and received a long, comprehensive suggestion for health and happiness. It was soothing and even a little soporific. A young Englishwoman, who seemed either very, very tired or nervously exhausted, went sound asleep and woke with a start when M. Coué, at the end, counted 1, 2, 3!

Then there was a general scraping of chair-legs as the clinic broke up. Thoughtfully, sceptically, hopefully—each according to his mental habit—we filed down the little stair-case. From the scraps of conversation overheard it became evident that almost every one of us had left some little portion of his pilgrim's pack of maleficent ideas in that little upstairs room. But it was also true that many were already gathering their old individualities about them like wraps that had been discarded for only a moment. The dyspeptic was telling his wife that "of course this theory might work with peasant and Latin temperaments generally—but—"

As I stood aside to make way while the paralyzed English officer was carried to his wheel

chair, I heard from over my shoulder the fragment of an amusing story being told about some one who had caught two red-nosed old cab-drivers at the station winking at each other meaningly as they drove away, each with an unsuspecting pilgrim—foreign and female—bound for the Mecca in the rue Jeanne d'Arc.

What infinite faith and patience is needed for this business of re-cutting the human mind to a new pattern!

There was, however, on most of the faces an expression of dawning hopefulness. M. Coué, smiling, chaffing, commanding, reasoning, had done his work of exorcising devils, though many of them were but lingering outside the door. There was that devil waiting to get back into the old blacksmith's legs—and how about the little green devil of doubt who had driven my own machine so long and so badly. He was probably out there waiting. He would smile patronizingly at my suggestion of taking over the wheel. "If Madame had begun earlier, perhaps. Of course courage and confidence are admirable, but one must not be foolish about it now and expect too much." Whereupon I should find myself back in

the tonneau, being bumped along as before, and my little green devil driver would wink back at other people's little green devils, as we left Nancy and the kind wonder-working *apostle of optimism* behind us.

This is what might have happened, but it didn't, and it didn't because of what I found when I came out into M. Coué's garden, shaded by fruit trees and lilac bushes. A warm sun was casting leaf shadows on the white pebbled walks. No devil would have felt at home there. Over in a corner I saw a group of women sitting. They were most of them bare-headed, poor, and toil worn, and with them were children and babies. It flashed across my mind that this must be the children's clinic of which I had read. While I was wondering how I could come near enough to hear, without disturbing the quiet of that little gathering, I noticed the pitifully frail figure of a woman lying on a nearby garden bench, with many supporting pillows. Her eyes, very big and dark in the deathly whiteness of her face, were fixed on me, and she was pointing to a chair at her side. Gratefully I tiptoed over to that point of vantage.

From it I could see and hear what was going on in that little group at once so simple and so mysterious. Mlle. Kaufmant was sitting in the midst of the circle, bending over the baby in her lap, talking to it in a voice low and musical, accompanied by gentle strokings of the hands. She might have posed as a symbol of Maternity, this grey-clad figure with soft dark eyes, hair touched with white and cheeks glowing with warm colour.

The calm of the scene was almost religious. Mothers sat with their work-weary hands lying idly in their laps, looking peaceful and confident. The children too were curiously quiet, even the babies. Even a poor little imbecile child, whose arms fluttered unceasingly while its head rolled from side to side on its pillow, made no sound. Birds perched in the lilac bush and perfume floated over from a near-by flower bed.

I found myself watching Mlle. Kaufmant's hands, fascinated by their movements. They were beautiful hands, sensitive and delicate, swift and deft. Stroking was a sledge-hammer word to apply to anything so infinitely gentle and ten-

der. It was more like the fleeting brush of a humming-bird's wing on a flower petal.

Only occasionally could I catch a phrase of what she was saying and these snatches sounded much like what mothers have been saying to their babies since the beginning of time, except that Mlle. Kaufmant was telling this baby that it was going to grow strong and well and happy, saying it in a way that left no room for doubt. Already her *"petit chou"* was better, the dreadful sore was beginning to heal, and to-morrow when he came again there would be still further improvement. And when at last she handed the baby back to the waiting arms, I saw there was indeed need of improvement; a wasted little skeleton with an abscess on its head. For a moment she whispered advice to the mother and I heard the promise of some needed delicacy.

Now she was bending over a child of nine with pipe-stem legs piteously twisted. *"Et toi, ma petite chatte?"* The little girl closed her eyes, smiling, and then began another rapid flow of words, entirely spontaneous and without a break, except that once or twice a sentence ended in a *"n'est-ce-pas?"* that sounded somehow like the

cheerful, hopeful chirp of a mother robin. Then a smile would flicker on the little cripple's face as she murmured, *"Oui, Mademoiselle."*

It was as though the child's mind had been a white screen upon which a moving picture was thrown, a delightful, enchanting picture of herself as she was going to be—as she was even now beginning to be! Little by little her legs were straightening out, gaining strength and growing longer. Already her appetite had improved and it would grow better every day. She would eat all the food provided by her devoted *"maman,"* thinking all the time how it was going to nourish her little legs and make them straight and fat as little girls' legs ought to be. All this would be going on while she was sleeping, and every hour the swelling of her knees was getting less and less until . . . and here came word tableaux picturing a gay little girl with chubby legs, dancing, rolling hoops and singing for joy. Then a sudden return to a graver note. "You must never be sad any more, *ma petite;* I do not wish it. When one is sad then everything goes wrong. From now on you will be gay and happy and when the time comes for you to make your first

communion you will go like the other children. *N'est ce pas, ma petite cherie?"*

I felt tears and a clutching sensation of pity as I watched the face of that crippled child, happy and smiling. This was a meningitis victim and it seemed impossible that such improvements could ever be realized.

Then from the bench beside me the invalid whispered that this little Léontine Freminet is one of the most interesting of the cases. Her improvement has already been extraordinary and every one believes that she will be one of the "great cures." Only a very short time ago she had been brought there with a rigid contracture of the legs, the knees bent up and held under the arm-pits. "Look how she is taking a few steps on the garden path supported by her mother." I must also see how the flesh is beginning to form under the skin on the pipe-stem legs. But the most amazing thing had been the improvement in her morale: When she first came her face seemed utterly hopeless and now look at the dawning intelligence, the smiles, and the actual suspicion of colour in her cheeks!

I looked and listened and wondered with the

usual mental reservations crowding in. Of one thing I felt absolute certainty, and that was that every word that Mlle. Kaufmant had said the child had accepted with absolute credence. So too did the mother believe. Indeed, every one in that circle was convinced that the changes described were taking place. If, as M. Coué had said, every idea must realize itself within the domain of possibility, and in proportion to the emotional force behind it, then undoubtedly every spark of vitality in that poor little being had been summoned to do its work of repair and rescue.

It would happen just as Mlle. Marie had said, for did not every one know that she had cured hundreds and hundreds of other children who had suffered as they were suffering, and more. This good suggestion of M. Coué was the way of the *Bon Dieu* to bring back health and happiness to the little children whom he had sent into the world to be well and gay. It was only by some unfortunate misunderstanding that they had fallen sick. But now all this was to be made right and already the change was taking place.

Upstairs in the cottage, M. Coué had been say-

ing much the same thing to his more sophisticated, grown-up audience, only he hadn't said it in the same way. He had given them an example in addition and subtraction as simple as two and two makes four and four less two leaves two, but some in that grown-up audience had gaped at the blackboard, wondering if it could not be done better in algebra. He had stated that a large proportion of human ills, mental and physical, were caused by fear, generated from the conflict of the imagination and the will, acting like two pairs of hands clutching at the steering wheel of the subconscious mind. This conflict could be ended by his method (child-like in its simplicity) and imagination, unhampered by fear, would guide the machine with the utmost possible efficiency. Unless this plan was accepted and acted on he could do nothing for us. He did not cure, he only showed us how to cure ourselves. Take it or leave it.

Here in the garden, Mlle. Kaufmant was applying the same principles to the desperate needs of little children, only *she* did not rest her case on an appeal to pure reason. Woman-like, she was more intent upon the end than upon the

means. The house must be swept and cleaned and its windows thrown open before it would be in order for the day's work.

There she stood, a compassionate, compelling, ultra-feminine little figure, bending over a small boy encased in a heavy plaster cast. She was telling him that underneath that plaster even now the *Bon Dieu,* who loved sweet little boys such as he, was working, working to straighten his spine. That every minute he would continue to improve, because now that he had learned the "good method" of M. Coué he would tell himself every night and every morning, on the string with twenty knots, that he was getting better and better. Every day he would feel more and more appetite and he would eat with relish the nourishing soups and jellies she had sent to his *Maman,* and finally that he would soon, *soon* be well and strong because she, Mlle. Marie, who loved him and whom he loved, desired it.

Watching the child's wrapt expression, I felt absolute conviction that no disintegrating thought of "I cannot" had wriggled through the solid phalanx of ideas which Mlle. Kaufmant had marshalled to the rescue. *Le Bon Dieu,* the doctor,

M. Coué and the soups and jellies would all do their work. That little unconscious was going to do as it was told. Mlle. Marie would see to it that it did. She was never mistaken. She had this affair in hand now and would see it through.

When the clinic was over I ventured to ask a question as to whether very young babies could be influenced through auto-suggestion. Mlle. Kaufmant seemed almost impatient at the ignorant doubt implied. "Does not M. Coué tell you that no suggestion can ever be effective unless it is accepted by the unconscious mind and transformed into an auto-suggestion? I have treated hundreds of babies and they have all—all—understood me and responded with improvement. Ask these mothers if it is not so. No one knows what the soul of a baby is like, but mothers have always known since the beginning of the world that it is only through love that they can be reached, that it is the only language they can understand. I do not know what is meant by magnetism. I do not bother my head about these things. The caress—what is it but the love that passes out from the heart through the tips of the fingers? Even the littlest of babies feel it with-

MLLE. KAUFMANT IN THE GARDEN CLINIC

out the necessity of words. I am a woman and I think with my heart. Let men of science use their brains to find out why this is so; I do not know. But let them come and watch. Then they can frame their theories to fit the facts.

"It has been my dream to work under medical observation, under ideal conditions of sanitation and cleanliness, where everything could be done to help these cases along. I would call it the *'Clinique des Enfants Heureux!'*" She paused, looking into space and I could picture the cheerful white painted room she was dreaming of, with toys, bright pictures on the walls, running water, and all the ordinary conveniences for the care of children which were now lacking. The Clinic of Happy Children!

Longing to hear more of the fascinating subject, but knowing that my train was nearly due, I went away pondering on all I had seen and heard, my mind seething with the questions I had not had time to ask.

The memory of that little garden, where I had seen sick children reviving like drooping flowers under a soft summer rain, went with me, never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER II

LITTLE CASTAWAYS OF HUMANITY

THAT autumn all America began quite suddenly to talk of Coué.

You heard very frequently that his method was at least as old as Hippocrates, who had known all about it, and that all good family physicians had been and were still practising auto-suggestion on their patients; that Coué's contribution to the subject was next to nothing at all. Nevertheless, prodigious numbers of people were reading the Coué book and the books about Coué and from every side there came rumours and first-hand testimony as to how these people were profiting by the idea in ways that seemed nearly miraculous.

M. Coué was being called, among other things, the Henry Ford of psychology. That comparison seemed a good one because it could be followed through. Ford had taken the complicated and expensive rich man's automobile and simpli-

fied it part by part until he had at last produced the little "flivver" within the reach of every farmer. He had begun with an engine that had to be cranked from without, but later substituted a self-starter, as safer and more efficient. Just so M. Coué had first started the engine of the unconscious mind with hypnotic hetero-suggestion and later had substituted the self-starter of conscious auto-suggestion and thanks to him people by tens and hundreds of thousands, who had never known before that they possessed unconscious minds, were finding not only that they had but that they could command them to their great personal advantage and convenience.

Also I found that many of my friends were making earnest attempts to apply the method to the treatment or training of their children. They had never seen it done and were a little awkward and shy about beginning, but the idea of its tremendous possibilities had gripped their imaginations.

More and more often I thought of the children's clinic and of the woman who had had ten years of practical experience in doing what all these mothers were trying to do.

So in December I went again to Nancy, hoping to see more of Mlle. Kaufmant and her work.

It was bleak winter weather when I arrived there. Sun, flowers and children had all vanished from M. Coué's little garden, although the crowd of adult patients was as great as before. I learned that the children's clinic had been suspended because Mlle. Kaufmant had been away, but my disappointment was forgotten in astonishment, when I recognized my informant.

It was in the rue Jeanne d'Arc and I had taken several running steps to catch up with a woman, walking very briskly, a slim, straight figure. When she turned to answer my question I saw that it was the English invalid whom I had last seen lying on the bench in the garden three months before—her face was not one to be forgotten. Later on I heard her story. She had received a terrible spinal injury in a coasting accident, which had left her helpless and in constant pain. No one had been able to offer her any hope of recovery or even of improvement. After nine years of this living death she had come to Nancy. Her first step had been taken in October and here in December she was taking a two-mile

walk every day. A faith almost mystical shone in her eyes, and she was staying on at the clinic to help others by her example, a living beacon of hope on the way.

When I inquired for the paralyzed English officer whose hope had seemed so forlorn in the summer, I was told that he had gone home to England, not in his wheel chair but walking with the aid of a stick. He had stayed at Nancy for nine months, with a totally unemotional, dogged perseverance, doing everything that he was told to do, and believing that the method was mechanically correct and therefore bound to produce a result in time. It did. A letter had recently been received from him stating that since his return to England, he had been able to throw away his stick. The signature was in his own writing, followed by the note "Written with my 'paralyzed arm.'" This was Captain Rogerson, of whose case much has been written. His paralysis was believed to have been caused by pressure of a fractured skull on the brain.

It did seem almost unbelievable that these two who had seemed to me the most hopeless of all the cure seekers only three months before should

both have realized such triumphs. I thought then of the little paralyzed meningitis victim, Léontine Freminet, whom I had seen learning to walk, and wondered if she too were numbered among the *"grandes guéries."*

Later I found Mlle. Kaufmant in her home; she had just returned to Nancy. I told her of the interest that had brought me back to her from America, and as I had never heard the history of her connection with the clinics, I asked her to tell it to me, and here it is in her own words:

"All my life I had been ill, but at the time of which I speak my condition was rendered more deplorable by a disease of the stomach and intestines and chronic appendicitis. In three months I had lost twenty-five pounds. I had been everywhere and tried everything, but I was going from bad to worse.

"For a long time I had heard people speaking of M. Coué, but the idea did not interest me. The doctors had been very kind to me, but they had all said there was nothing to be done. One day I went with a friend to see M. Coué, not hoping to be cured, but only to see how he practised his

method. He asked me what was the matter with me, but being very timid by nature I did not even answer him. As I had gotten it into my head that my case was hopeless, there was no beneficial result from that visit. I had come there as a complete sceptic, even prejudiced against suggestion, but I saw a spectacle such as I had never seen before.

"It was in M. Coué's little office, and the patients were representative of all classes. Women of the best society were sitting on campstools while poor sick peasant women were in the armchairs. I saw a man with a face full of kindness talking to every one in the same way without the slightest difference. I watched the eyes of the sick people and noticed the complete change in their expressions after the séance. Everything was changed; it was as though bright sunshine had driven away a fog and every one in leaving said, 'Thank you, Monsieur.' In the magnificence of this spectacle I thought myself in the presence of a new St. Vincent de Paul.

"I returned to the clinic but still with the fixed idea that I was impervious to good suggestion. Meaning to be honest about it, I said to M. Coué,

'Don't bother about me.' He answered, 'But you, too, should be cured. You are a great sufferer—I want you also to be one of the great cures.' 'No,' I said, 'please don't trouble yourself about me, I only want to watch you.'

"Many times I returned to the clinic, always finding M. Coué giving the same loving care to his patients, without the slightest distinction of class. If there was any preference it was for the most unfortunate. I was filled with admiration.

"Gradually I lost my sceptical and rebellious attitude and found myself becoming an enthusiast for the method. Little by little my pain disappeared. One day I went straight from M. Coué's house to the church and made this promise to God. 'If I am to be cured, I shall consecrate the health that is given me to the service of the suffering poor.' I had no idea at that moment just what I should do, but I was filled with a great desire to help others. One day M. Coué said to me, 'If you have absolute faith and a profound desire, you will be able to do as I do,' but this seemed to me then outside the range of possibility.

"Six months passed, the patients becoming

more and more numerous every day, until M. Coué had more than he could possibly do to treat them all. One day he wrote me a letter, saying, 'You admire the life I am leading, you think it is beautiful because I am enabled to do good. I believe that this life will become more and more beautiful as the knowledge of my method spreads abroad. This life can be yours as well. I have need of some one to help me, for you see that I can do no more than I am doing. I have desired with all my heart to train pupils, but I have never before found any one as fervent as you are, any one who would answer and to whom I could make this request. You have so great a sympathy for suffering human beings that nothing will hold you back. You will work only for the love of doing good and without recompense. I assure you that you will be a very good pupil and I want you to be my first.'

"In this realization of my long-cherished desire, I never thought that I should ever be able to perform cures, only M. Coué could do that. I began by keeping records of cases, preparing patients for treatment and doing what I could to cheer and encourage them. Then children began

to come to the clinics and M. Coué asked me to look after them particularly. Before I knew it I had begun to give them suggestion and found myself getting the most amazing results with childish infirmities of every sort. Nevertheless, I thought it would be impossible for me to succeed with grown persons, although M. Coué assured me to the contrary.

"One day there were again too many patients and M. Coué asked me to take some of them, as I had finished with my children. I said to them, 'Do not feel yourselves obliged to come with me,' and they answered, 'But, Mademoiselle, we have confidence in you also, and it is easier for us to talk to a woman than to tell our troubles publicly before everybody.' So I entered upon this new work with all my heart, saying to my patients, 'Think that M. Coué is speaking through my mouth.' My patients returned to me again and again and thereafter they continued to come in increasing numbers until I had sometimes as many as three hundred or three hundred and fifty persons on the same day.

"It was in 1914 that M. Coué took the small house in the garden for his clinics and I furnished

the little upstairs room for the children. We had seven clinics each day, beginning at seven o'clock in the morning and working until seven at night. Every one went first to M. Coué, who explained the nature of suggestion to them by means of the various experiments. Then all those who wished to do so were invited to go upstairs with 'Mlle. Marie.' After that I had no more scruples.

"Never did I have to hunt for a word, they came naturally from my heart. When I had been working all day long, having sometimes as many as forty persons in one clinic, I would find myself stronger toward the end of the day; as though I had been galvanized! I worked on without effort and the more people there were the easier it was.

"Sometimes I would find a hundred people waiting patiently to see me and with the grace of God I would manage to treat them all. Many of those who came were sceptical and rebellious as I had been, thinking it folly to suppose that their troubles could be cured by auto-suggestion.

"Later other pupils came to help M. Coué and I gave myself again entirely to children."

Mlle. Kaufmant had not had time since her return to see any of her patients. To my enquiry for Léontine Freminet, she answered that her progress had been very rapid. On her last visit to the clinic she had taken several steps around a table, without support, and her morale had shown wonderful improvement. Yes, by all means, I could go with her to see how the little girl was getting on. So, in the very chilly morning of the following day we set off together to find Léontine in her home. It was in one of the poorest quarters of the town, and we had many delays on the way, because we were constantly meeting ex-patients or their relatives, and of course we had to stop to hear news of them. Many and varied were the stories I heard and I found that Mlle. Kaufmant could give very practical advice as well as good suggestion.

Once her keen eyes spied, far off, the dwarfish figure of a little hump-backed girl, just as she was disappearing through the door of a factory. Before I knew what had happened she had darted off in pursuit with the incredible speed of a mouse and was bringing her back in triumph for me to see.

The little factory worker seemed delighted to recount the history of her illness and cure. She was twenty-two years old now—all her childhood had been spent in lonely misery, because of the loathsome tubercular abscesses which had kept her housed away from other children. Then the Demoiselle had cured her and everything was changed. She could work now all day long without being tired, and she was gay too, going to parties and to the cinemas with the other girls.

No, Mlle. Marie must not think that she is wholly frivolous. She tells all her friends about the "good suggestion" and many of them are using it. Nevertheless, she is making up for lost time. "Life owes me something," she said with a toss of her head and a flash of her bright, black eyes. Mlle. Kaufmant smiled and shook her head a little doubtfully as she dismissed her patient with the injunction not to overdo it.

At last we reached an ancient tenement house, and after many flights of stairs and dark, winding passages we came at last to a door and knocked. It was opened by Léontine's mother. Her kind, honest eyes filled with tears when she saw her visitor. "Surely the Good God has sent

you, Mademoiselle; He has heard my prayers. My poor little girl! For three days she wept when she heard you had gone and in the night in her dreams she would call for you. Ever since she has been slipping back and back, until now she is almost as she was before—always sad and lifeless. She will only crawl on her hands and knees and God knows what that means in stockings! Indeed yes, Mademoiselle, I have tried to give the suggestion faithfully every night as you taught me to do, but I can no longer get her to make it for herself in the night and morning. She does not seem to care any more."

We found ourselves in a poor, cheerless room with an unmade bed, and something boiling on a little stove. Near the one window two little girls were sitting; one bright and curious, the other a wilted, down-cast little figure with spindling, twisted legs dangling from the chair. Yes, it was Léontine, but no longer the *petite miraculée* of the Garden. She did not look up or show any sign of life.

Mlle. Kaufmant was evidently much distressed. She stripped off her gloves hurriedly, and seating herself before the child began to

examine and caress the helpless legs with murmured words of endearment, which finally took the form of suggestion.

"*Ma petite Chatte,* you must not be sad. You were grieved because I went away, but now I shall not leave you again. Never do I really leave my children until they are quite well. And now you will begin again to make the good suggestion. You have stumbled, to be sure, but from now on you will make rapid progress. You will begin to smile again, knowing that you will be happy." As the stream flowed on and on without a break, hardly a pause for breath, a faint glimmer of light showed on the little downcast face and at the end she raised her eyes for an instant and smiled shyly.

As we went our way homeward through the crooked streets, Mlle. Kaufmant talked of the pathetic case we had just left. "A child," she said, "can be taught to operate itself, as it can be taught to operate a machine, and when it is well and strong the task is always simple. But with such a one as this, and nearly all the children who are brought to me are the little castaways of humanity given up by every one, there must be a

strong helping hand to cling to until they have found strength to help themselves."

Léontine, then, had been left to herself before she was in a condition to carry on the work she had begun so promisingly. Her mother had been unable to supply the galvanizing battery of emotion behind the outside suggestion and the child herself had not the strength of mind or body to carry on the night and morning self-assurance that she was getting better and better.

On the following day, I turned the subject again to babies, by reading an extract from a letter written to me by M. Coué in which, after speaking of the good results which had been obtained by "caressing them tenderly and talking to them softly," he said: "This has usually been attributed to a sort of magnetism emanating from the operator. That is possible, but I do not believe it. It seems to me rather that the caresses and the musical voice of the person produce an auto-suggestion of health in the child which causes the cure. As soon as the child begins to understand what is said to him from the ages of five or six the same method will bring better results." Mlle. Kaufmant nodded approval until

we reached the last sentence, and with that she did not agree. "M. Coué used to think that children under four years old could not understand, but after I had succeeded in curing a twenty months old baby of a painful illness, and the little boy had said on seeing me later on *'a pu bobo'* (pain gone away), I took all the little sick babies that came to me—and it went marvellously well."

She was very definitely of the opinion that babies accepted suggestion as readily, if not more readily, than older children. This was perhaps because they had no negative ideas whatever with which to oppose it. She gave many examples of startlingly rapid cures to prove the correctness of her theory.

"A little two-year-old girl came in October, 1920. The father was an alcoholic, and the doctor had said that the child could not live through the winter. She had been in the Hospital for Incurables at Paris. When she came, both her eyes were bandaged and also her arms, which were covered with running sores. She would not eat and was extremely depressed and fretful. She went away smiling from the first treatment and began to eat. She came to the clinic the

third time with her eyes unbandaged and a little later with the bandages removed from her arms. Nothing was left of the abscesses but the scars. Now she is strong, well and vigorous."

Mlle. Kaufmant brought out her box of testimonials for me to read. It was a big pasteboard box, decorated with the flags of the Allies and brimming over with scores and scores of letters. Many of them were from the grateful mothers of little babies. The one which I have chosen to quote in full carries the unmistakable note of sincerity which is characteristic of them all. I know that it cannot be accepted as evidence from a medical standpoint, but after all it is the kind of evidence on which many of our convictions must of necessity be founded.

"Nancy, August 25, 1914.

"MADEMOISELLE:

"It is with the keenest and the greatest pleasure that I wish to thank you for having given back to my little girl of two and a half years health, which it seemed would remain unknown to her.

"At about the age of eight months she had gastroenteritis, which she escaped with great difficulty. Hardly was she well, when abscesses commenced both on the body and behind the ear.

"I went to three doctors in Nancy, the last of whom advised me to take her to the hospital for punctures. . . . After the punctures, a drainage was put in—always without result. One abscess was hardly healed when another appeared, and the only consolation I had from the doctors was that they said she would be thus until her fourteenth year.

"Last February her eyes became so bad that she could no longer open them day or night, as though she had been thus since birth. Daily visits to the hospital became necessary; morning and night there was crying and screaming when the operation had to be resumed, and this lasted about four months without any amelioration. My little girl did not open her eyes even for five minutes during the entire time. At the end of June you offered to take care of her.

"At the end of the third treatment, my little girl opened the left eye and after five weeks of your miraculous treatment, the cure was complete. I no longer had a blind child but a little girl with wide open eyes, who appeared never to have been ill, to the great astonishment of all those who had seen her before. It was a miracle. Moreover, the child had been extremely nervous, suffering from insomnia, hitting her head against the wall. She was impossible. She had no appetite. Today, thanks to you, and you alone, the transformation is complete.

"Only recently headaches made me fear meningitis. She became ill tempered and once again she lost her appetite. Two of your kind treat-

ments were sufficient to eradicate these symptoms. For this reason I can never thank you sufficiently for having done me the greatest service, for my daughter owes you a second life and the inestimable wealth of perfect health; abscesses, headaches, etc., all have disappeared.

"Thank you a thousand times, Mademoiselle, with my thanks never sufficiently repeated, I assure you of my complete and eternal gratitude.

"MADAME GAUTHIER.

"5 Cité de Saverne, Nancy."

In going through the letters I was struck by the fact that instances of instantaneous cures of the dramatic sort that are every day occurrences in M. Coué's clinics for adults, seemed to be comparatively rare with children.

M. Coué has numerous cases of patients who come to him believing themselves to be deaf because they once were so in reality. Their unconscious minds having once accepted the idea of deafness, are unable to let go until the moment when M. Coué teaches them to think, "I can hear; I can hear perfectly." Then the inhibiting idea is banished on the spot.

Children will naturally have had less time or opportunity for acquiring such complexes and inhibitions. But if the instances of sudden cures

are rare there are still some to be mentioned, such as the case of Alice Mercul, aged ten, who had suffered from enlarged tonsils and adenoids, causing great difficulty in breathing. Four years before she came to the clinic she had a hospital operation, removing the tonsils and adenoids, which should have relieved the condition, but had not done so. After the first treatment she was able to breathe without opening her mouth and after six weeks she breathed with perfect ease.

The case of Andrée Schmidt is not quite so simple of explanation as the foregoing one. She was four years old when she first came to the clinic in October, 1920. Since the age of two and one-half years she had been unable to move and had spent the last year in a hospital suffering from a tubercular condition so far advanced that the doctors had given her up. Every night she had a fever of 102 and she appeared to be unable to speak. After one treatment she began to talk and after the second her fever lessened. In one month she was well.

And here is a letter from a grateful mother who is willing and anxious that her testimony should be published to the world.

"I, Madame Roudeau, living in Nancy in the Rue des Fabriques No. 51, am deeply gratcful to Mlle. Marie who has cured my little four-year-old girl, who had not been able to walk since she was one year old owing to rickets, caused by attacks of bronchitis.

"All the doctors who had treated her told me not to try to make her walk. She had no strength and nothing that they prescribed for her made her any better.

"Since the very first day we went to see Mlle. Marie my child has walked. Now it is three months that that demoiselle has been treating her. She has never once had an attack of bronchitis and one can see her getting stronger every day. I authorize Mlle. Marie to show my letter to all the *Mamans* who are in despair over their sick children—so that they may know what blessings Mlle. Marie is spreading about her.

"Madame Roudeau.

"Nancy, July 19, 1915."

Stammering is greatly improved or yields immediately to treatment in almost every case. One little boy came to the clinic stammering most fearfully. The operator, in this case M. Renée de Brabois, picked him up in his arms very tenderly and talked to him for a few minutes, explaining that he did not really need to stammer, it was only because he was afraid, and then as-

sured him with emphasis that now he *could not* stammer. He was cured—he would never stammer again. The little boy repeated these affirmations without stammering. He was then invited to try to stammer as before. He tried again and again but found he could not do so.

Indeed, stammering is such an everyday affair at the clinic and so certain of cure that it was hard to make Mlle. Kaufmant talk about it at all. She preferred to go back to her *grandes malades* —the tragic aftermath of the great cataclysm through which France has just passed.

As I paused over the photograph of a particularly lively, intelligent-looking girl, dressed for her first communion, Mlle. Kaufmant told me that this was Madeleine Beninger, in whose case Mr. C. Harry Brooks had been particularly interested when he came to visit the clinic in August, 1921. His many readers will remember the sympathetic chapter devoted to the children's clinic. Here is the story word for word as I heard it:

"In May, 1921, a woman came to tell me of a little girl in her house who was suffering from Potts Disease. The child was lying face down-

ward in her bed, as it was impossible to turn her on her back. She asked me to go to see her, but I could not as I had many, many patients. The woman came again to tell me that the child was crying all the time, so I somehow managed to go to see her. When I arrived I found a child with such an expression of atrocious suffering and despair on her face! She was neither sleeping nor eating. From the very first visit she was helped —after the third treatment her suffering disappeared completely and she slept from seven at night until eight in the morning. They had to wake her to give her her *petit déjeuner* and she ate with an appetite she had never known before at noon and at night. At the end of a month of this treatment (the child had her back in a plaster cast) the doctor found that the back was in place again and that the cast was no longer necessary.

"The legs were completely lifeless. The doctor pronounced that they would have to be put into plaster for two years. The child began to cry and the father and mother did not want to take it back to the house from the hospital, so they brought it to me laid out in their arms. 'The doctors want to put our child back into a plaster cast for two years—we want to hear what you will say.' I told them that we could never interfere with a doctor's orders. The little girl was in despair and cried out to me. I said, 'We will see what can be done in one month.' At the end of that month she began to move and after a while her bones regained their strength. She was

MADELEINE BENINGER

able to go to her first communion though she had feared that she could not. Her mother wrote to me, 'It is not only the child that you have saved but three persons. Seeing my child suffer continually as I did, being powerless to help her, I was getting to be a neurasthenic. But my husband is very good and we are now all very happy.' "

The box seemed inexhaustible, but the letters contained in it were all very much alike; only the nature of the diseases varied, covering in their wide range almost every affliction that the flesh is heir to from eczema to "demoniac possession." Most of them were of the major sort, with a tremendous percentage of tubercular troubles—meningitis, hip-disease, etc. Some of these letters were ill-spelled and naïve in expression, while others were very much the reverse. One and all, they sought to express the overflowing gratitude of maternal hearts toward the woman who had saved their children from suffering. It was the only recompense they could offer her, since Mlle. Kaufmant, like M. Coué, has never accepted a sou from a patient. There were some touching little childish scrawls from the children them-

selves, and once I came upon a highly coloured card decorated with religious symbols and the legend *"Vive Sainte Marie."*

Nor was there any dearth of first-hand living evidence to support these testimonials and I very soon found that incredulity no less than credulity can be strained to the breaking point.

Mlle. Kaufmant kindly let the word go forth that a visitor from America wished to see and talk to her patients and immediately a stream of children and their mothers began to arrive, willing and anxious to bear witness to the marvels worked by auto-suggestion in their individual cases. Many of the children were now at work and could only come after hours, like sturdy little Jean Germa, who arrived on his bicycle to show me the most frightful scar left on his leg by a tubercular abscess—healed in one month by auto-suggestion, after more than six months in a hospital without any relief. It was peculiarly interesting to find that there were cases where the doctors in the Nancy hospitals had summoned Mlle. Kaufmant to assuage the suffering of incurables on whom every remedy known to science had been tried in vain. I heard of more than one

instance in which she had done so with the final result that the patient had been restored to health.

This is the story told me by Jeanne Grosjean, a sweet-faced, serious-looking girl of twenty-one. In 1920 she had been for a year in the hospital, apparently in a dying condition. Her heart was out of place and her side dilated. She had an abscess on the liver and ulcers of the stomach, besides an abscess on her head. In constant pain, she had only slept fitfully for six months and was unable to retain any nourishment. When the doctors had given up the case as hopeless, one of them sent word to Mlle. Kaufmant, asking her to come to the hospital to see what she could do toward allaying the pain and giving some degree of comfort to the dying girl. Mlle. Kaufmant went twice a week for *eight months.* Not only did she bring comfort, but a complete cure. At the end of that time Jeanne was examined by the doctors in the clinic, who pronounced that her heart and pulse were strong. The girl, when I saw her, was on the eve of marriage, and she begged Mlle. Kaufmant to give her one more suggestion for continued health, and happiness. She did so, while I listened. It was a beautiful,

touching picture of the life that was to be hers, full of peace, contentment and usefulness to others and she was to have babies of her own to bring up in the way of the good suggestion. This girl, I thought, would go forward armed with a faith equal to that of her teacher.

In listening to these stories of seemingly miraculous cures it was difficult not to become imbued with the idea that here was a woman gifted with some power of healing peculiar to herself, or at least that through long practice she had developed some natural force, as yet unclassified by science.

Of course, if this were true, it would put her work on an entirely different footing from that of M. Coué, who only teaches us to heal ourselves —and it would be of very little use or importance to the world at large. But Mlle. Kaufmant would not permit such an idea.

"Some women," she said, "are unquestionably better fitted than others for the treatment of sick children, but innumerable mothers learn to give suggestion to the children perfectly. The amount of success attained is only determined by the intensity of their faith and the degree in which

they possess the love and confidence of their children."

To illustrate this, I was taken one afternoon to see Mme. D., the wife of the president of the principal bank in Nancy, a highly intelligent, cultivated and sympathetic woman, who had become an ardent disciple of auto-suggestion. Having learned the method from watching the children's clinic she had applied it to her own children with immediate success. Later on she had treated the peasants in the village near her country place in the mountains, and the stories of her cures and the letters from her patients were no less remarkable than those I had been hearing and reading previously.

Nor is it to be supposed that these cures are in any way indigenous to Nancy. For instance, Charles Baudouin in his book, "Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion," says: "A little girl aged eleven was brought to me at the Jean Jacques Rousseau Institute (Geneva) in November, 1915. On her temple was a tubercular ulcer the size of a florin. It dated from four months back and had obstinately refused to heal under treatment. The child proved sensitive and confiding. Sugges-

tion. Auto-Suggestion to be carried out by the patient conscientiously every morning and every evening. Great was my astonishment and equally great was the astonishment of my pupils when the girl returned a week later with the ulcer already cicatrized. The epithelium covering the surface was still diaphanous and pink in colour. A few weeks later the appearance was almost normal. Within a month from the date of the first suggestion the cough had completely disappeared, although the time was the middle of winter. Next month a slight bronchitis supervened and was cured without difficulty. Appetite had become normal, sleep was uninterrupted, lasting from eleven to twelve hours. Rabinovitch, who kept this case under observation, tells me that the improvement was continued, although the patient (whose family is in humble circumstances) lives in a damp ground-floor tenement and in hygienic conditions otherwise unfavourable.

"In view of the results above recorded it will not surprise the readers to learn that two cases of Pott's disease (tubercular curvature of the spine) have been benefited by treatment at Nancy."

In listening to Mlle. Kaufmant's talks to her patients, I longed to have some of them transcribed word for word, and with this end in view I hunted up a clever little French girl who could take stenographic notes from rapid dictation. I find that much of the charm of these suggestions is lost in the attempt to translate them into English. What equivalents have we for such terms of endearment as *"Mon petit Chou"* and *"Ma petite Chatte"* (my little cabbage, my little female kitten)?

But here is one as nearly as I can give it. The six year old child to whom it was addressed had had infantile paralysis and I had seen her in the garden group in August.

"You, my little one, are now getting well. I can no longer tell which of your legs was the sick one. Since you came to me your pains have vanished. It is well that you no longer suffer and that your leg is growing strong. Now you are going to begin again to be hungry and every time you eat—slowly, very slowly, chewing the food very fine and turning it over and over in your mouth, you will think, 'This is for my little leg.' Your legs will keep on growing longer and longer and little by little you will begin to do what other children do. Already you are beginning to walk

a little, and your progress will be very rapid. Naturally you must always be prudent. You will think that you can walk with the help of your Grandmamma—that you can use your legs more and more easily every day—and very soon you will be walking like other little girls. You will know that everything your Grandmamma tells you to do is for your good and you will wish to obey her. You will not be fretful and nervous any more and you will go to sleep in your bed like a good little doll (*une petite poupée bien sage*). You will eat well in the morning, at noon, at four o'clock and in the evening. Everything that your Grandmamma gives you is very nice, you love it and have pleasure in eating it. You will think that I am beside you and the nourishment is going into your legs and making them strong—and very soon you will be perfectly well. You will be a child who can run and jump with the other children. You will be cured."

There are many others, and I am tempted to give more of them, but this will serve as a working model.

Very little has been written concerning the children's clinic and there is much more to be said, but I hope that the description I have attempted to give will convey some idea, however inadequate, of the inspiration one gets from actually seeing what is going on there. The method holds

MLLE. KAUFMANT AND SOME OF HER PATIENTS

Standing center, Jeanne Grosjean (See Page 43). Standing right, Marie Wagner (child who was blind). Seated right Léontine Freminet and her sister (See Page 29). Left of Mlle. Kaufmant, Child to whom suggestion was given (See Page 47)

possibilities as yet undreamed of, in the education and training of parents as well as children. Not only for sick children, but for those fortunate ones who only need protection in their natural state of health and happiness from the evils wrought by bad auto-suggestion, often given unconsciously.

CHAPTER III

A THOUGHT IN THE MIND

M. Coué does not offer his method of conscious auto-suggestion as a *substitute* for medicine. He would have us employ it as medicine's most powerful aid and coadjutor. This fact must be borne in mind.

If in describing the Nancy clinics I have given instances in which medicine and surgery have proved impotent to effect cures, until the power of auto-suggestion has been brought up as a reinforcement, it must on no account be deduced that they are any the less necessary.

The inference to be gathered is that while the doctor can diagnose, operate or prescribe, the patient must learn to furnish the element of vitality without which a return to health may be impossible.

In other words: if the child is sick, call the doctor—then see what auto-suggestion can do to help him in remedying the condition.

The foregoing chapters have dwelt at length on the personality and methods of the pioneer directress of the first children's clinic of its kind in the world. The reason for giving so full and detailed an account of her work and her own attitude toward it, is, that by so doing I have hoped to make it clear to any mothers who may read this book that the only equipment needed for success is love and faith in the potential power of auto-suggestion, combined with a thorough understanding of the simple principles of the method as taught by Emile Coué.[1]

It is undoubtedly true that any one to be successful in teaching auto-suggestion on a large scale must be gifted to an extraordinary degree, not only with the qualities already mentioned, but also with the supreme gift of bodily expression, a power of look and intonation which can project a glory of confidence into the minds of total strangers; a personality to conquer resistance, cast out fear and produce an immediate realization of that state of happy expectancy in which auto-suggestion acquires its greatest power.

[1] "The Practice of Auto-Suggestion," by C. Harry Brooks, is recommended.

Now, as very few of us possess these qualities in a pre-eminent degree it is indeed fortunate that they are not essential for the successful teaching of auto-suggestion to a child—your own child.

On the steamer, coming over from France, I heard M. Coué explain to Mme. Knipper-Tcheckova of the Moscow Art Theatre, his own sure and tried remedy for stage-fright. "I always imagine," he said, "that I am looking out on an audience of little children, confiding, uncritical and anxious to hear. So I have no more fright. I know that they will understand me."

If any audience of little children is the ideal one to M. Coué, then yours will surely be the most ideal of all, for you, more than any one else in the world, possess your child's love and confidence, and so you can proceed to your task with every assurance of success.

In considering the use of auto-suggestion, the first question to occur to an expectant mother, or to the mother of a young baby, is always, "How soon can I begin?" The answer is, "Begin at the beginning." M. Coué advises starting in even before the child is born, but at any rate

from the earliest hours of its life. If there were no other reasons for doing so, it would be enough that an enormous advantage is secured in accustoming both mother and child to the process, so that the first dawn of consciousness will find the baby responsive and the mother well past the nervousness and uncertainty of the novice. She can become as nearly perfect as nature will permit in making her voice soft, low and musical, if it is not so already. The suggestion, when it has become a matter of habit, will be produced spontaneously and without that hesitation which conveys an idea of uncertainty to the speaker as well as the hearer. Psychologists, in observing the practice of Mlle. Kaufmant, have attributed much of the potency of her suggestions to her rapid utterance as well as to the soothing quality of her voice.

I have already made use of the cinematograph for a comparison, but here again it may make the reason for this a little clearer.

You know that tired, overwrought people often go to the "movies" for rest and relaxation at the end of a day filled with worries and perplexities. They do this, not only to be amused, but because

they find there a kind of mental oblivion, and this peculiarity is common to all movies, good or bad. The attention being fixed on a constantly moving picture, produced with lightning rapidity, the mind soon becomes as blank as the screen on which the picture is being thrown. The whirring film unreels itself so fast before the eyes that there is not a fraction of a second in which other ideas than those conveyed by the picture may gain entrance to the mind and it is more than possible that a slight degree of hypnosis results.

With spoken suggestion the mind is reached through the ear, but the effect should be the same. There is a smooth flow of words and word pictures following each other so swiftly that there is no chance for other thoughts to slip in between. This is the explanation that M. Coué gives, when instructing his patients to repeat the *ça passe* formula so rapidly that the words are lost in a buzzing sound and the idea of pain has no opportunity to intervene.

Of course there is no implication here that a baby is to be assailed from birth with an avalanche of carefully thought out words. Mothers have

always found natural expression for their delight and admiration. All that is necessary at this stage is to realize that these words are actually the first suggestions and to go on intelligently developing such outpourings of maternal love into conscious auto-suggestion. Later, when infantile troubles and difficulties come along an equally natural and personal form of phraseology will be ready to express the thoughts of corrective improvement.

M. Coué in his "Education as It Ought to Be" advises parents to give suggestion to children while they are asleep. He tells them to approach the bedside very softly so as not to wake the child and murmur the suggestion twenty times over in a very low voice—this too is always a part of Mlle. Kaufmant's instruction to the mothers of sick babies.

Now, no mother could ever do this without beginning to wonder about the nature and content of the little unconscious to which her words are being addressed—but here we have something that is wrapt in the Eternal Mysteries. If all the opinions which have been expressed on this subject by the wisest minds in the world could

be cited here it wouldn't bring us any nearer to the exact truth.

If you are of a mystical turn of thought you will naturally incline to think with Wordsworth:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home."

Or you may speculate on the theory held by some psychologists that the unconscious is adult at birth and comprehends the whole race experience. You may think of it as an utter blank or as a closely written page of Heavenly Secrets which will slowly fade away in the light of earthly experience. For practical purposes the difference in theory doesn't matter.

Electricity is something that we employ every day without understanding its nature. To attempt to know all about the human soul before consenting to make use of its deepest forces would be like refusing to make use of the electric

current until the company that puts it at our disposal could furnish us with an exact statement as to what electricity really is.

M. Coué and Mlle. Kaufmant probably represent the two extremes of opinion on this subject. M. Coué, having based his theory and method on what is known of the processes of the adult mind, capable of reasoning and understanding, cannot give the same explanation for the reactions of children under four years old, and, unlike most of us, he is not given to expressing definite opinions where his information is inadequate. Consequently he merely says that "it seems" to him that babies are reached by "a sense impression, producing an auto-suggestion of health."

As the unconscious mind never sleeps but goes on with its activities in the form of dreams and the direction of bodily functions, it is at least evident that it will receive the same sense impression from the low soothing voice while the baby is sleeping. With this certainty in mind you can set out confidently to follow the practice of Mlle. Kaufmant, to whose "extraordinary results" M. Coué has born witness in the preface to this book.

Baudouin says, in "Suggestion and Auto-Sug-

gestion," "I should point out that to be really fruitful this simple method should be put in practice every evening without exception. Coué is in the habit of saying that a child should have suggestion every day, just as every day it has a cup of milk or a cup of cocoa for breakfast. The parents should make it a part of their routine. In such conditions the results are sometimes so remarkable that parents to whom I have advised this procedure have at the end of a few weeks told me that they were positively 'alarmed' by the marvels that had ensued. I may add that if the parents set out awkwardly at first, no great harm will result, since suggestion can undo whatever suggestion has done. Should an error be made it will be easy to correct it."

The study of child psychology has made wonderful advances in the last decade, and we are constantly hearing of the wonders accomplished through the analytic study of individual children.

We have seen the establishment of children's courts, where children are handled not as potential criminals, but as human beings who are in danger of going astray and only need a helping hand to get them back into the right path. Now-

adays, it is hardly possible to open a magazine or a newspaper without finding an article on child-psychology from the point of view of education or of race preservation.

We read of such investigative experiments as the one being conducted at the Psycho-Clinic of Yale University, where, according to Arnold Gesell, Ph.D., Professor of Hygiene, "fifty unselected normal infants are being studied at different age levels." Dr. Gesell goes on to say that "most of the physical and development defects of school children originate or pre-exist in the preschool period. Practically every case of mental deficiency originates and is recognizable in the preschool years.

"Three-fourths of all the deaf, a considerable proportion of all the blind, one-third of all the crippled, and over three-fourths of all the speech defective come to their handicap in the preschool period. Numerous cases of mental abnormality, of perversion, of faulty habit formation and of conduct disorder have their roots in the preschool years. Our kindergartens and nurseries must reckon with many problem children, manifesting serious errors or defects in behaviour develop-

ment. One-fourth of all our school beginners fail of promotion at the end of the first year in public school. Retardation, abnormal prematuration, normal precocity, superiority and normality all tend to reveal themselves well before the child cuts his sixth year molar."

All such investigations and studies are of enormous value and significance, but the unique advantage of the Coué method is that it can be applied to *all* children, with or without a study of their individual needs. It is good for "what ails them," it cannot fail to be of positive benefit and it may be combined with any sort of treatment that is indicated.

What we are asked to do is to train ourselves to realize that every movement and sound we make, every word we utter in the presence of a child is capable of being transformed into an auto-suggestion for better or for worse. With all the intelligence we can command we are to strive to eliminate such words and acts as would tend to produce harmful auto-suggestion, substituting others of a contrary nature.

There is always some one around to say that this idea is not new—some one who has read the

same thing a hundred times elsewhere and can quote any number of passages to prove it. Unquestionably, it is as old as the hills, but M. Coué is not content with just saying it over again—he insists that the idea must become a reality in our daily lives, that we must put it into practice. *A thought in the mind is worth two on the shelf.*

And when one really begins to think about it it is not nearly as simple as it sounds. Just try to analyze the suggestions you give out in the course of any one day and find out how much has to be weeded out of them if they are to be even harmless—innocuous. Robert Louis Stevenson once said that he could make the daily newspaper into an Iliad if he only knew what to leave out. Most suggestion given to children even in the unpalatable form of direct admonition would register in the end, were it not so hopelessly entangled with harmful ideas, ideas of fear, weakness, humiliation, administered at the same time.

If we can only do away with some part of the welter of wrong suggestion in which we habitually live, we shall still do wonders for the next generation. What a triumph it will be when

some of these endless chains of stupid, insidious, cruel ideas which have been parroted down from parents to children, since the beginning of time, can be broken.

Consider the case of seven-year-old Susan engaged in the harmless amusement of examining her small self in the mirror. Her mother sees her and says almost automatically, "What a vain little girl, admiring herself in the mirror!" Now, she doesn't really mean that, and she hasn't stopped to think about it; she has said it instinctively because that is what her Aunt Susannah said to her thirty years ago under precisely the same circumstances. If she had thought back she might have remembered that for a long time after that she had glanced into the mirror furtively and always with a sense of shame, wondering why she was "vain" and what she had to be vain about. And then one day she was caught at it again, and this time Aunt Susannah had firmly implanted the promising germ of an inferiority complex. "Really, what a snub-nosed, freckle-faced little girl like you can have to be so vain about I can't imagine." Of course such bad suggestions do not always take root and flourish any

more than virulent microbes do; it all depends on the amount of resistance they meet. A healthy, happy, not over-sensitive child, is able to produce good auto-suggestions to drive out many of the bad ones, but where the child already has a tendency to morbid self-consciousness such suggestions are most favourable for its increase. Bacon says: "'Tis not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh that doth the harm." And, after all, what is this venerable notion about children and mirrors? Is Hannah More responsible, or does it go back to the beginning of time?

There may be one child in a hundred who has indeed developed the thought of personal vanity, but is that any reason why the other ninety and nine should have the idea of a vice as yet uncontemplated suggested to their innocent imaginations, when by chance they examine their reflections with natural curiosity and interest. In one happy nursery I know, there is a pier glass, which affords a considerable amount of harmless amusement to the children, who skip and gesticulate before it, and practise making faces at themselves whenever they feel like doing so. No children

have ever impressed me as being more unaffected and unselfconscious.

A suggestion may be good or bad according to the way the thought is expressed. One woman has told me that she does not approve of teaching the Coué method to her boy as a means of relieving pain. I find that her only conception of Coué's teaching is that we are called upon to spend a considerable amount of our time in a state of retirement and relaxation, cultivating a state favourable to the "outcropping" of the unconscious and reciting mysterious formulæ.

"No," she says proudly, "I prefer to say to my boy when he has hurt himself, 'You will not cry, for you are the son of a brave soldier.' " She does not realize that she has used a perfect example of a good suggestion,—the presentation of a constructive idea of improvement with an emotional urge behind it. The boy sees himself overcoming the desire to cry and his imagination seizes upon the picture of himself in a heroic attitude, pleasing and emulating his gallant father.

But let an ignorant nurse take the same idea and give it a twist in the wrong direction and see what happens.

"Think how ashamed your father is going to be when he finds out that he has a cry-baby for a son." The same thought leading into a blind alley. The boy *is* a cry baby and he is *going* to bring shame to his father and to himself. A suggestion to be good must always point the way *out* of a difficulty. The heroic, courageous attitude toward life makes a vivid appeal to youthful imaginations and children find their models for hero-worship in the stories they hear and in their older playmates.

A short time ago an accident which might have been a very bad one occurred at the Zoo. A boy attempted to pat the bear on his nose and the small hand being mistaken for a new variety of peanut was badly lacerated before it could be withdrawn. The boy was perhaps too dazed and frightened to cry, but at any rate he didn't, he just stood gazing at the bleeding hand without a whimper. The little son of one of my friends was standing nearby and witnessed the whole scene in round-eyed astonishment. It was evident that the other boy's pluck had made a deep impression. A few days later his mother saw him give his own finger a severe pinch in the door.

It must have hurt a lot but he did not cry, he just stood gritting his teeth, repeating over and over, "*He* didn't say nuffing—*he* didn't say nuffing." In his imagination he was transported to that scene in the Zoo, and he was getting healthy pride and satisfaction from thinking that he was behaving like that other boy who had so captured his admiration.

Children sometimes invent extremely practical and useful forms of suggestion for themselves without any outside prompting or interference whatsoever. A little girl with a greedy love for sweets, discovered very early in life that uncontrolled inroads on boxes of candy belonging to grown-ups were apt to produce disastrous results in the form of punishment. Finding that promises made to others were difficult and irksome to keep, she invented the idea that a promise made to herself and reinforced solemnly with uplifted hand, was peculiarly binding and sacred and could never on any account be broken.

This idea was so completely accepted by the unconscious that when once the hand had gone up, the very thought of a wish for another piece of candy vanished instantly not to return. This

was a secret private arrangement never mentioned to any one. The habit proved so useful in all the affairs of life that it remains in practice to this day when the child is a grown woman.

Where such helpful forms of conscious auto-suggestion do not occur naturally to the minds of children, it is possible to propose them as a means of overcoming their difficulties.

There is such a thing as falling into the way of saying "Don't" with and without reason.

It must be said sometimes, but whenever possible some other form of activity should be offered as a substitute for the one that is being prohibited. Can we fail to remember the awful feeling of boredom that used sometimes to sweep over us when there was nothing that could properly be done, and when an hour seemed as long as a week does now? An old Irish nurse, who had a peculiarly active and mischievous boy in her charge, used sometimes to lose track of him entirely, and presently she would be heard wailing about the house, "Horrnsby, Horrnsby, where iver ye are, come out o' thot. What iver ye're doin', quit ut."

This is the sort of "general suggestion" that

can and should be avoided. If something can be put within the child's reach that it will want to do of its own volition it is infinitely better, and does away with the necessity of saying "Do this" and "Don't do that." Don'ts with many parents are nothing short of a nervous habit.

The Boy and Girl Scouts Organizations are doing an incalculable public service in getting hold of boys and girls in their most restless stage and giving them a natural healthy outlet for their activities while training them for usefulness in after life.

Every one knows that there is no way of learning quite as satisfactory as finding out for oneself through experience. And so those reactions that come to small children naturally through sense impressions in the course of investigating their surroundings are of the highest educational value.

A mother says to her baby, "Don't go near that hot stove," but the baby has a great curiosity concerning the stove and some time when it thinks she is not looking it stretches out a small pink finger toward the hot surface until it gets the sensation of a tiny burn. The baby jumps back,

thrusting the finger into its mouth, perhaps without even crying, for it knows it has done wrong and sees now why it "mustn't touch." The lesson has been learned once for all. If (and it is an actual fact that this used to be advocated in stern New England) a parent had taken the small hand in charge and had conducted the experiment forcibly, the value of the lesson would have been lost. The children to whom this cruel thing was done must have received a horrid shock to their confidence in the good intentions of their elders.

Unfortunately all of the baby's self-conducted experiments cannot come to such satisfactory conclusions and the mother needs all her tact and wisdom in overseeing them.

If ridicule is to be used at all in helping children over the beginnings of bad habits, it should be employed with great subtlety and unmistakable kindness. We must be very sure that we are not getting the wrong reaction from a sensitive child. Many children seem to thrive on teasing, and of course there is no doubt that it is a great advantage to have the susceptibility to teasing so dulled by experience that one becomes immune

to it in after life, but if we are considering its use in suggestion we must go about it more intelligently than is usually the case. Of course the healthy rough-and-tumble give-and-take sort of teasing that children get among themselves is a very different matter from the heavy-footed proceedings of grown-ups.

One over-sensitive little girl of six was given to shedding tears on the slightest provocation and so her very much older sister, deciding to take the matter in hand, invented this ingenious plan of action. Whenever the child began to be tearful she was made to face a blackboard on which the sister proceeded to sketch a face with round eyes, shedding tears exactly as the child was doing it; their course would be traced down the cheeks of the image to a running accompaniment of sarcastic and humorous comments. The trouble was that the small victim of this well-meant effort received an overwhelming impression of being bullied as well as teased and was also convinced that the sister was enjoying its misery. This produced a feeling of helpless rage and impotence to stop the tears as long as the process continued.

Another woman who understands children has used the same sort of scheme with many children and with unfailing success—the whole difference being that with her the idea is conceived and carried out in a spirit of intelligent kindliness. She invites the child into conference, and armed with pencil and paper, proceeds to draw a turnip with an amusing curly tail, and then goes on to tell about a highly entertaining organization to which many children belong, called the "Turn up Club." She explains that this is a club in which children learn how to cry all they want to without interference from grown-ups, who, it appears, only object to the variety of crying that is done with the corners of the mouth turned down—this point is illustrated on the turnip-face. In the club it is done with the corners turned up. By this time the child is usually ready to try it, with the results that can be imagined.

Tears are a small matter, but ridicule is a terrible weapon to use with children. M. Coué often compares conscious auto-suggestion to a gun, which we must learn how to handle if we are going to make it useful and not dangerous. Here is an example of what can, and what actu-

ally has happened when it has been pointed in the wrong direction.

A highly nervous child of four years old was given to violent fits of crying. He was staying with some relatives, who tried to get him out of these tantrums by making fun of him. They managed to do it in a way that excited the child still more, until the crying became hysterical, and on one occasion he emitted a curious sound, a sort of whoop that sounded like a crow. The relatives thought this very funny and proceeded to mimic the sound, inviting the child to do it again whenever he cried after that. Very soon the crow became a feature of every crying fit and before they realized what was happening it began to occur in the course of ordinary sentences when he was in the least excited.

Now when the boy is a grown man the habit remains fixed. He is very clever and has managed to be unusually successful in business in spite of this handicap. But imagine the embarrassment of talking over the telephone or holding an important business conference, when this odd interruption is likely to occur unexpectedly in the midst of any conversation.

"Suggestion can undo whatever suggestion has done," and it is highly probable that this affliction would yield readily to the Coué method of treatment.

Many readers of Du Maurier's "Peter Ibbetson" must have experimented with the fascinating idea of "dreaming true," with what degree of success it would be interesting to know. At Nancy I met a charming young Englishwoman, who told me that her small girl had succeeded in controlling her own dreams. The child had been suffering from terrifying nightmares from which she waked screaming every night. At last her mother had suggested that she should try thinking of the pleasant things she would like to dream about while she was dropping off to sleep, without letting her mind dwell on the fear of bad dreams. The child was very sceptical and did not seem at all impressed by the idea, but after several successive nights had passed off quietly the mother made inquiries. "Oh, yes," said the little girl, "I thought I might as well try doing what you told me, and it worked. Now I make my dreams and of course they are nice ones."

The preponderance of imagination in the lives of many children often leads to curious confusions between truth and fiction. When a boy looks you in the eye solemnly and relates some incredible adventure in which he has slain a lion or seen a cat with three tails, it does not necessarily mean that the child is untruthful—it is much more likely to mean that he is going to be an author or a naturalist when he grows up.

He may have constructed the scene so vividly in his imagination that his unconscious mind has accepted it as a reality, and he actually believes he is telling the truth. It ought not to be hard for the average grown-up to understand this mental process. Does it not sometimes happen that we have had personal encounters wherein we have figured in a way that would have been highly creditable, even brilliant, if only we had thought in time of that repartee, which did not in fact occur to us until several hours later. Somehow in telling the story the repartee gets fastened on in its proper place and after it has been told several times in this satisfactory form we forget entirely that this is not just the way it happened.

Real lies are generally told to avoid the consequences of wrong-doing and are actuated by fear. As in all other forms of naughtiness the child should not be permitted to think that it is natural for it to do this sort of thing. "Boys like you who tell lies go to prison" is the worst suggestion possible under the circumstances. If such a statement seems unnecessary to you, it need only be said that there are plenty of cases on record where children of supposedly intelligent parents have actually been shown a prison and told that this is what they are headed for if they continue in their evil ways. Tell the child that he is *not* a liar, that he cannot possibly be one, with any amount of elaboration on the essential meanness of the lie itself, not of the boy who has told it.

It seems impossible to avoid the question of corporal punishment, so it may as well be faced squarely now—to spank or not to spank. I am not certain where M. Coué stands on this point. The only passage in his writings that has a direct bearing is the following: "Above all avoid treating children with brutality, for you risk giving them an auto-suggestion of fear and hate." Of

course there is a considerable difference between a mild spanking and brutality and it is possible that under some circumstances M. Coué might consider the former as a salutory "Sense impression"—I do not know. But if you are among those who cling to the belief that spankings have their place in the education of the young, and think that your offspring are of the sort that need to be spanked—it will at any rate be well to bear M. Coué's warning in mind and try to see that the punishment is administered in such a way as to avoid the possibility of those undesirable effects.

Unfortunately, no state is less favourable to getting the reaction of another than one of righteous wrath, and if one waits to cool off it is somehow very difficult to start in in cold blood. There seems to be something inherently crocodilish and unconvincing in the "This hurts me more than it does you" attitude. I personally have only executed one spanking and that was a total failure. When the baby turned around and remarked solemnly, "You did a mistake to me," I was more than ready to agree.

CHAPTER IV

A STORY WITH A POINT

With your baby you have things very much your own way, but with an older child certain problems may arise which you will have to meet by various methods, depending naturally on the type of child with whom you are dealing.

A friend of mine decided that the Coué idea was an excellent one, and she concluded to put part of it, at least, into practice. She wished to suggest to her small boy, who was extremely fanciful about his food, rejecting most of what was offered to him, that he should like his breakfast, his milk, his poached egg, his stewed fruit. Having waited until she was sure he was asleep, she sat down beside his bed and proceeded to follow the formula, telling him slowly and distinctly what she wanted his unconscious mind to accept. She had murmured on softly for a few minutes when his head rose from the pillow, he fixed hurt and astonished eyes on her, and de-

manded: "Mamma, why *do* you talk like that?" My friend was so nonplussed by this that she could only escape as gracefully as might be, nor has she essayed again to influence her sleeping son, and as to trying it when he is awake, she frankly says that she does not know what to say to him.

Here is one way out.

There is no child who doesn't love a story. A sick and fretful child can be soothed more easily by telling it a story than by any other means. It is with this in mind that you can best catch your child and teach it auto-suggestion.

Baudouin says, "In the education of children nothing could be more erroneous than to believe that in them imagination is an imperfect form of reason, so that imagination must be suppressed and must be replaced by the perfected reason. Imagination is something very different from the larval form of reason. It has its rights side by side with and independently of reason; it is a precious force for the individual were it only as a medium for the outcropping of the subconscious and as a precondition of suggestion. We must teach children to do justice to all their faculties;

they must not let any one faculty encroach; they must not, for example, allow imagination to usurp the place of reason; they must cultivate every faculty, imagination as much as the rest, nay more than the rest. Fairy tales which certain 'positive'-minded pedants would like to proscribe are the starting point of artistic education, and should on no account be neglected."

The tale of Mlle. Kaufmant in the garden at Nancy has in it the makings of a delightful story, just how delightful and interesting will of course depend on the way you tell it, but knowing what kind of stories your children like best to hear, you can arrange it accordingly.

Here is the way it is being told to a very little boy when he has met with some small accident. He likes it better than any other, and always cries "Say it again" when it is done.

"Once a little boy, just as big as you, was playing and running very fast, when all at once, down he fell, right on such sharp stones, and cut his leg and bumped his nose and his lip and they swelled up and he cried, for it hurt very much. So his mother picked him up and ran with him until they came to a lane with a high grey wall

and pink roses spilling over the top. Presently there was a little green door in it, and over the door was written: *'Ça Passe,'* and the little boy's mother said to him, 'This is the place where we shall get all the hurt stopped.' She pushed open the little green door and in they went. And inside was a most beautiful garden. He looked around and he saw at one end of the garden many little children, boys and girls, all looking sad. Some had legs hurt like his and some were ill and had to lie down. But at the other end of the garden all the children were playing and were laughing and well, without any trouble at all. Then he looked again and saw that in the midst of the little hurt children there was sitting a lovely princess. She wore soft blue and silver clothes, and had long beautiful hair and a little crown of lilies on her head. The children gathered around her and she took each little one on her lap—just as I am taking you now—she stroked the hurt place and said to the pain, ' "Go away, go away!" You say it with me: "Go away, go away." We will say it over and over, and look! Why, the pain *went* away! Why, you are better, just like the other little boy!' And that

M. COUÉ'S HOUSE IN NANCY

little boy stayed there a little longer, looking up into the princess's face and feeling *so* much better, just like you. Then she said: 'Now, you are well enough to go away and play with the other children,' and he laughed, he was so pleased and happy. The princess kissed him and he was well and went away."

If your child is suffering from something more severe than a tumble, something that will take several days to be cured, you will vary the story to suit the case. You will tell how the child in the Princess's lap was made a little better, how it smiled and felt happier, and how she told it that when it hurt very much it should stroke the hurt place itself and say, just as she was saying, "It goes, it goes, it goes" (or, better still, *"Ça passe, ça passe"*). That this always helps, and very soon it will make it quite well. You should make the child realize that it is a true story you are telling, that the garden is a real one, though far away—that some day perhaps you will really take your little boy to the garden. You can picture the voyage to him, the steamship, the great wide ocean over which you will travel, the arrival at a port in France with the people all speaking

French and looking so different in their blouses and caps from the people on the pier at this end. And then comes the strange foreign train with its small compartments and off you go through such a pretty country, with castles and little grey towns and farms looking like gardens, all of them so carefully tended and planted in long narrow strips. Presently you reach a town called Nancy, where you get off. And in that town you find the lane with the high grey wall and the roses and at last the little green door. There are lots of other children going in, too. They all smile and say, "Here comes another little boy to see the Princess, who makes us strong and well and happy, because she loves us." And he will push the gate open himself and walk inside.

It will be well, as your child develops interest and understanding, to explain that the reason the pain listens to the Princess and obeys her is because every child has two minds. The one the child knows all about, that thinks and speaks and is so useful and clever, that listens to what is said, understanding what it hears; the mind that learns to read, that wants to play, that asks so

many questions, and another mind deep inside, that is just as busy and useful, although it keeps so quiet a child doesn't know anything at all about it, and forgets it entirely. Yet that is the mind which manages the works inside you, that sends the blood coursing through the arteries, that digests your food, that breathes, and that, if you see something that is going to hurt you, makes you jump out of the way before, as you would say, you could stop to think.

The outside mind doesn't have to think, you see, because the one on the inside is always on the job, attending to its own particular business. This is the mind that works the pains, and hands them over to the mind on the outside. The outside mind gets nervous and excited and won't let you forget the pain at all. It keeps calling back to the inside mind for more about that pain and at last you feel very bad indeed.

But if you listen to the Princess, and lie very quiet while she speaks in her soft voice, your outside mind soon forgets about being excited and the mind on the inside has a chance to hear and to do as she tells it to. It begins right away to work with all the soothing, healing things inside

you that are only waiting for this chance to get to work and push the pain away. Very soon you begin to get better and better and before you know it you are well.

Children understand this and are interested. To them the idea of possessing two minds is quite as easy to comprehend as the fact that they have two hands. You can go on from this point, teaching gradually that the boy or girl can speak to the inside, the unconscious mind, just as successfully as the Princess in the garden. When your child is hurt or sick, tell it the garden story, and when you reach the place where the Princess takes the little child from far away into her arms, stroking the place where the pain is and saying, *"Ça passe, ça passe"*—very fast, like a bumblebee buzzing, do the same yourself. When once you have your child accustomed to this idea, teach it to train its unconscious mind according to the Coué method. Tell it that the best times to talk to the inside mind are in the morning, just as it wakes up and in the evening as it is dropping off to sleep, because when the outside mind is almost sleeping, the inside mind is most awake and ready to take orders.

You can make a cord, with twenty knots in it, from twisted red, white and blue strings, and say that this is the kind that is given to the children in the garden as they go out of the little green door. For every knot the child is to say, "Every day in every way I am getting better and better," until it has said it twenty times over. This is to be done *every* night and *every* morning without fail, even when there is no sickness. It will please most children to feel that thousands of other children all over the world are doing this very same thing and getting health and fun out of it.

In the children's clinic the problem of the "naughty" child is also handled with unfailing success. But first let it be distinctly understood that Mlle. Kaufmant is absolutely against calling a child naughty or admitting that it is natural for a child to be "bad." When such cases are brought to her she says at once, "What—*you* have done that! A child like you! It cannot be, but you will not do it any more. To-morrow you will be better."

Scolding a child, telling it how naughty it is, how it will surely come to a bad end if it goes on

as it is doing, all this is the worst way to go about the business. Such statements might be accepted for fact. Suggestion must be positive. You must never lose the child's confidence in you nor weaken its confidence in itself. You must emphasize the fact that it is a good and loving as well as a beloved child. If it has been naughty, has fallen into tears and tantrums, you can use the same garden story. The Princess is talking to another little boy, this time, whose inside mind has somehow managed to get all mixed up, and made a lot of mistakes which have brought unhappy feelings. The Princess is holding him very tenderly in her arms, telling him that she knows he likes to do sweet, nice things, and to be good and happy. That he will never do anything like this bit of disobedience again because his inside mind understands now and won't want to. And when he goes to bed that night he will tell his inside mind that it is going to forget all about the naughty thing and be good.

The point is to draw a line between what the child has done, that may be wrong, and the child himself. The *thing* is wrong and not to be done,

but the child is all right, and can certainly get the better of his mistakes.

Almost any child's problem can be solved if some one is at hand with kindness, patience and understanding, the necessary time to give full attention and find out just what is the matter and bend every energy to the removal of this particular obstruction to normal happy existence. As this is very seldom the case, the sooner a child can be taught the way to handle his own problems, to "operate his own machine," the better it will be.

You can reach a boy or girl most easily through their own particular interests. If your boy is deep in the mysteries of radio, use it as an analogy. Explain that the outside mind communicates with the mind inside by a means resembling radio. There are no wires between the two, but the inside mind has antennæ that catch the signals, thrown out by suggestion—by the words uttered through the agency of the outside mind. If the boy is having trouble at school with a particular lesson, get him to radio to himself morning and night. Just as a radio message

is repeated over and over again in broadcasting, so he must repeat his message again and again until the receiving station of his inside mind has got it. Tell him that the conditions for radiographing to his inner mind must be favourable to get the best results. There must be peace and composure, no storms, rushing about, no other confusing messages trying to get through. When he is quiet and relaxed in bed is the time for him to send his message. Suppose it is arithmetic that is bothering him, then he should send his message in words approximately like these: "To-morrow my arithmetic is going to be much easier to me. I *sha'n't* make mistakes and I shall understand it without trouble. It will get easier and easier and I shall do better and better work every day. Soon it will be so easy that I shall like doing it. Beginning to-morrow my arithmetic will be easier and easier every day."

Tell him he should give his message time and repeat it often, keeping it up for several days, and that he will notice very soon that his inside mind's receiving station has caught the message he is sending over and is responding to it. Any difficulty should be approached in like manner,

always remembering that the constructive element is to be stressed, the confidence in well-doing and well-being strengthened, the mischief-working fear of failure displaced by contrary thoughts.

M. Coué says that we must ask the Creator why it is so much easier to make bad suggestions than good ones. The bad suggestion is the common one and that is why constant vigilance is required if we are to use conscious auto-suggestion in the right way. It is far more natural and usual for relatives to wonder audibly where on earth the child got that funny nose or to remark that something really must be done about its mouth, than to say that it moves easily or has nice eyes. Yet to call a child's attention to its imperfections is distinctly the wrong type of suggestion. We know that the ideal condition is to be as nearly as possible unconscious of ourselves—with the general impression that the exterior we present to the outside world is at least not displeasing or revolting. Any child started out in life with a contrary conviction is bound to have itself on its mind, more or less, and to become self-conscious.

I know of one child who went through her adolescent years thrusting out her under jaw in a manner that was actually so forced as to be absurd as well as unbecoming. It seemed to be an unfortunate peculiarity that no one knew how to explain. But when the girl grew up she revealed the fact that the habit had been caused by overhearing one relative saying to another, "What a pity that child has such a weak chin."

A child's imagination is a very alert and living thing and no adult can realize the force with which suggestion acts on it, transforming a given idea into an auto-suggestion. If this point needs any proof I can offer the following story told me by a woman whose work in child-psychology has already achieved wide celebrity. In a class of normal children of about six years old she had one little boy called Johnny who was always climbing about and disturbing the other children. Faced with the necessity of inventing something to keep him quiet and occupied she told him to put his hand down flat on a chair and look at it, saying, "I believe if you do that your hand will hold you still," and after that the class proceeded in peace for the remaining twenty minutes. As the other

children got up to go, the teacher turned to see the little boy still standing motionless by the chair. "Why, Johnny," she said, "the class is over, why are you still standing there?" Johnny looked up at her reproachfully and answered, "You said my hand would hold me still and it's doing it." To her astonishment she discovered that the child was actually rooted to the chair and that the hand could not be released until a definite counter-suggestion had been given.

This, to be sure, is an extreme case, but is probably not as unusual as one would think, and it is well to bear this story in mind while we go on to consider the need of sterilizing our daily suggestions to children.

Whereas it is probably true that the average child would be better off without any outside interference at all than with the sort of suggestion it usually gets, the question is really not worth discussing, for the reason that no child ever is or ever will be left entirely alone. They are by nature dependent on their elders and they are bound to receive suggestions, just as they absorb a certain number of microbes in the air they breathe. If there is no nurse to tell them about

hobgoblins, or if by a miracle there is no other child to furnish unhealthy explanations of natural phenomena, there will still be a number of adjustments that have to be made as the questions come up day by day, and there is always a right and a wrong way of going about it.

Certain things *are* dangerous and *must* be let alone, such as a dog of uncertain temper, medicine bottles, or matches. Arbitrary commands, backed by threatened punishment, do not always keep a child out of danger. The elaborate explanatory method of taking the child into your confidence has the serious drawback of occupying too much time when the situation is a critical one. Now Mlle. Kaufmant teaches Obedience *per se* as one of the conditions necessary to health and happiness, and she emphasizes that idea in all her suggestions to children. We shall do well to follow her lead in the matter and make "obedience" a familiar word with a very definite meaning.

It is the ideal of obedience that should be suggested as something fine and satisfactory in itself. Some things *must* be let alone because they *will* hurt, but get it over with the fewest words

possible, and above all, avoid making dreadful pictures of the fearful consequences to follow, should the command be disobeyed.

Here is a story to illustrate that point: A little boy I knew delighted in playing with matches. Spankings had little effect and there seemed to be no way of stopping him, so at last his mother gave him a copy of "Strübel Peter," with its incomparably exciting and terrifying pictures of conflagration and disaster following upon Peter's disobedience. Did this have the desired effect? Not at all! On the contrary, the boy actually set fire to a curtain deliberately, in order to reproduce the scene which had so stirred his imagination. The child was not a pyromaniac, either.

Most children will respond readily to the idea that they are to be trusted, and it is not a difficult thing to awaken in an ordinary child a sense of personal honour and its responsibilities. Effort in that direction will prove far more profitable than if given to arousing fear, or suggesting the possibility of deceit and disobedience.

You will find Coué constantly reiterating the importance of confidence in yourself, of a con-

viction that you are able to master all the elements of your being, an attitude of mind that when confronted with a problem will say at once, "I can," never "I cannot." This is the attitude you should seek to cultivate in your boy or girl, and not only where mere physical health is concerned. There are sick souls as well as sick bodies to be guarded against, and many lives have been made difficult or even ruined through the ignorance of those in whose hands lay the training of the child.

The boy who gets into mischief most often is usually full of vigour, a vital, healthy and entirely normal little person. To harp on his wrong-doing, to tell him again and again that he is a bad boy, that he will be severely punished, or as many mothers do, to exclaim before visitors that Tommy is always so disobedient, that you cannot trust him, that he cares nothing for what is said to him, that he is the worst little boy in the street, with all the other wailings and accusations that may come to mind, is to train him in the very things you want most to avoid. His imagination seizes on what you say and makes much of it. The constant repetition of such remarks

acts as suggestions which he accepts, and which will in time have a strong effect on his unconscious mind. He will become steadily more mischievous, he will distrust his impulses toward good, he will believe that he is naturally bad and act according to that belief.

This being so, the reverse follows. Criticism there may be, but it should always keep in view the point to be arrived at, that of getting away from the fault toward the desirable state of gentleness or truthfulness or obedience required. Just as in auto-suggestion for illness, it is not the pain or the sick state that is made the subject of thought, but its opposite condition of freedom from suffering or bad health.

It may safely be said that no other one difficulty causes more acute misery in the life of the average child than the question of clothes. In the first place the child's attitude toward clothes is generally misunderstood. The fondness for one garment or the dislike of another usually has its foundation, not in vanity but in its sense of personal dignity. Often as not, it is some trifling question such as gloves versus mittens that has taken on a deep significance. The fact that mit-

tens are unquestionably better for making snowballs is not enough to counter-balance the fact that other children of the same age are appearing at school in woollen gloves.

Your small girl may go out feeling perfectly happy and contented when from your point of view she looks a little fright, or perfectly miserable when you are most pleased with her appearance. When there is a sudden and apparently inexplicable dislike for some perfectly worthy article of clothing, it is nearly certain that the child has some reason for visualizing itself as making an absurd appearance in it. This is particularly apt to be the case when the thing is in any way unusual and unlike what other children are wearing, and it is nothing short of cruelty and folly to force the child to go out in the world clad in the offending garment. You can be sure that if you do so your child will not only endure acute discomfort but it will also have its vitality and efficiency lowered for the time being at any rate.

What kind of a time would you have and how scintillating would you be if you were made to go out to dinner in a Mother Hubbard wrapper?

You will say that the comparison is far-fetched because you will be thinking of that pretty and expensive velvet coat that your little girl hates for no reason at all and will not wear to school if she can possibly help it. No, the comparison is not far-fetched, because nothing is pretty unless you think it so and if you think a thing ridiculous it is ridiculous to you. If in your imagination you visualize yourself as presenting a ridiculous appearance, then you are not going to be at your best and have a pleasant time. This is a very vexing question to parents, as it isn't always easy to substitute other clothes for the eminently suitable ones that have already been provided just because of a child's whim. A good deal can sometimes be done with a very subtle form of counter-suggestion. The mother of a little boy who would rather die than wear a certain handsome and becoming blouse suit of shepherd-plaid, because he has seen a girl wearing a dress of the same material, might try turning the conversation to the hardy Scottish shepherds, six feet tall, who wear the same sort of stuff, and if that doesn't work, if she is unable to think up another idea sufficiently convincing

to displace the auto-suggestion already at work in his subconscious mind, then she had better save time by sending the suit off to the dyers to be produced later as a perfectly new one of dark blue, indubitably masculine and inconspicuous.

Growing girls in the gawky stage are often peculiarly sensitive about their appearance. No grown-up who has lived through such a period can ever forget the wretched, hang-dog sensation of having to go forth weighed down by some detested hat or frock, one's whole outlook on life blurred and distorted by helpless misery. Of course the girl should be able to auto-suggest herself into another frame of mind, but if she doesn't know how to do it for herself, it is the time for some one to lend a hand if troublesome complexes are to be avoided.

Before leaving the subject, I want to say once more that no argument, however sensible, no threat, no pleading, is going to get a child over one of these difficulties, unless a contrary idea is actually accepted by the unconscious, and displaces the conception already there. If the child sees itself as ridiculous, what you yourself may

think about it will make no difference whatsoever. You can force it to wear the thing in question, but you cannot make it happy or efficient while it is doing so. Wilfred Lay says, in "The Child's Unconscious Mind," "The force of the negative in unconscious thinking is virtually nil. . . . The only way to abolish an idea or stop an action is to efface it with another idea."

Then there is also the question of the child who is fussy about his food. "Eat your nice oatmeal," says Tommy's mother; but unfortunately Tommy's unconscious mind is entirely occupied by the preconceived idea that oatmeal isn't nice. It is something disgusting and revolting and he is dabbling at its edges with his spoon, telling himself that it can't be done. "You eat that oatmeal at once," roars his father, and Tommy picks up the spoon and attempts to swallow a mouthful in fearful haste and while he continues to think, "I cannot swallow it." Of course he chokes on it, for his throat has contracted in obedience to the thought, "I cannot swallow."

Various sorts of pressure are then brought to bear, so that eventually he does swallow it all, but the result of eating a thing while the imagina-

tion pictures it as loathesome is to surround that particular species of nourishment with a horror that may last a lifetime. That "nice" oatmeal has to Tommy all the engaging qualities that you or I might find in a bad oyster.

To this day I cannot look at a harmless baked apple without a shudder and I should never think of trying to eat one. Until M. Coué explained the law of reversed effort, by the experience of the clasped hands which can't be opened, while one is thinking "I cannot, I cannot," I never fully understood why it was so nearly impossible to swallow a baked apple under pressure from the outside. In the light of this scientific discovery, a means should be thought out for inducing Tommy to think "I can" before he attempts to swallow the oatmeal, for oatmeal is really a shocking think to choke on—as any one knows who has ever tried it.

The power of suggestion, waking and sleeping, can be brought to bear in overcoming these whimsical dislikes in matter of diet. Knowing your child's ruling passions you will know best how this is to be done. If his ideal is some famous athlete, he may be induced to auto-suggest

the oatmeal down his throat, if he is told that his hero has to devour a plateful every morning while he is in training. Let him picture himself becoming day by day more like his magnificent model in the development of brawn and muscle. He will tell himself, "If *he* can—I can."

Instances without end could be produced as evidence of the extreme susceptibility of childhood, but fortunately there are not many people so hopelessly grown up that they cannot remember what it felt like to be a child. Most of us have only to think back a little to find stories of our own which only need a little analysis to be perfect illustrations of the truths on which the Coué method is founded.

In a recent number of *The Bookman* an article has appeared by Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Professor of Philosophy at Haverford College. Dr. Jones, writing on "The American Parent and the Child," emphasizes over and over again the immense force and vitality of the impressions given children in the home. Speaking of the young child, we are told: "He is in fact almost as sensitive to *suggestion* as is the hypnotized subject." The italics are his. He says later on,

speaking of the power of the home suggestion and the home spirit on the young mind, "These same forces that start the malleable youth in unfortunate directions and produce a *set* of character and a tangle of habits and dispositions which baffle the teacher and professor, may equally well organize and form those inner tendencies and springs that shape the gentleman, the scholar, the moral hero and the saint. Goodness is as contagious as badness."

Even if one ventures to disagree with Dr. Jones in his last statement that Goodness is *as* contagious as Badness, the important fact still remains that Goodness *is* contagious. By suggesting goodness, health, grace and happiness to the growing child, you form his mind in those measures and incidentally you shape your own mind as far as is possible in the same mould. For no conscious auto-suggestion can be given without thought—with thought comes the weeding-out process and when once we begin to work on that cluttered bramble-patch we call the mind, it is astounding how many rocks and roots and discarded what-nots have to be thrown out before we can do anything at all.

Yes, it is a lively kind of mental exercise that is waiting for us when we start out to apply the Coué method in family life, not at all like the state of Nirvana my friend pictures, and we shall find plenty of use for our wills as well as our imaginations. One of the most distinguished psychologists in England confessed after an hour of talk with M. Coué that he had been picked up every five minutes or so on bad auto-suggestions. We shall be doing well indeed if we are not all but deprived of speech during the early stages of the undertaking.

Here are a few of the most crucial things that M. Coué would have us remember to do and not to do in the presence of children:

Always maintain an even temper.

Speak in a firm but gentle voice.

Avoid any suggestion of cruelty that would destroy confidence.

Never speak ill of any one.

Always answer their questions with kindness and intelligence.

Never tell them they are lazy or naughty.

Always give them encouragement, even in the most discouraging circumstances.

Never talk of illness before them—teach them that health is normal.

Never instil fear of any of the conditions natural in life.

Never give them ideas of unnatural things to be afraid of.

Awaken a love of study and work.

Teach them to be polite and amiable to everybody.

Develop self-confidence and decision by every means.

Teach them to think always that they are going to succeed.

Teach them that they must work hard to attain success.

Above all, give them a good example in all these things.

If all this sounds old and familiar, like Sunday School texts, remember that M. Coué will not let us off with the texts alone. He insists that we must analyze each one of these ideas in the searchlight of what we now know of auto-suggestion, carrying them through to their ultimate conclusion in all the ramifications of daily life. A very different matter this from hearing the same

thoughts read once a week from the New Testament and then going off and forgetting about it.

We may never be able to define the unconscious mind, to grasp its secret, but we are learning how to make use of it, and that is all that is required for our purposes; it has become a part of our stock in trade. Coué has proved certain facts in regard to it and has shown us the way to control certain of its powers. In teaching our children what he has taught us we are helping to guard them from the dangers of ignorance, and are using consciously and wisely what has until now been left to the most haphazard chance.

CHAPTER V

IFS AND BUTS

THE objections that are made to the employment of the Coué method are almost without exception based on misunderstanding of M. Coué's intention. In this chapter I shall try to answer or even to anticipate some of them.

There are those who decry his teaching because it has no connection with any established form of religion, or with their own particular one. M. Coué has described his personal belief as "The Religion of Humanity," and he goes on to point out that an affiliation with any special doctrine would impair the usefulness of his method in other quarters of the globe. In view of the phenomenal spread of the idea within the past few years it seems hardly fantastic to suppose that Polynesian mothers may some day be teaching it to their children, in the hope of saving their race from the extinction with which it is now threatened owing to the forcible introduc-

tion of our notions of civilization. Even now East Indian and South African patients are no unusual sight at the Nancy clinics.

On the other hand, it has already been shown that a woman, a devoted adherent of the Roman Catholic Church, has found in the method a vehicle for the practical expression of her faith, in doing good to others. It occupies the same position in relation to religion that it does to medicine.

Next we come to the allegation that M. Coué designs to "dethrone the will." This is of all others the objection that is oftenest put forward and it has the least foundation in reason or in fact.

The will and the imagination, the conscious and the unconscious minds, are two separate entities, each with its own sphere of action. The will can and does direct the imagination, when it has learned how to do so, but it must never fight with it; they must work in harmony. M. Coué says, "When the imagination and the will are at war, the imagination *invariably* gains the day."

The will knows nothing about operating the functions of the body, such as breathing, circu-

lation and digestion and if we attempt to control these functions by will power alone our efforts will be futile. There is no question of weakening the will by training the imagination to be a help rather than a hindrance.

Every morning as we wake up and every evening as we go to sleep we are to give our orders to the unconscious mind just as we would perform any other regular household duty.

This is the only respect in which M. Coué's teachings may be said to affect the will, and any person, man, woman or child, who can follow out this direction faithfully, without having a stronger will power at the end of six weeks, must have had a will as strong as a will can be before he began the experiment.

Have you tried it? Have you ever tried to do anything, no matter how simple or easy, twice a day, without ever missing a single time, no matter how tired or how sleepy you were, and did it or did it not take will power? The most important task prescribed for the conscious mind governed by the will is this little daily repetition, and if you can do it you need not worry about having your will dethroned.

To quote Baudouin again, "Induced suggestion is not a violation of the subject's individuality; it is a means of training the subject's will power of auto-suggestion.". He also says that he thinks auto-suggestion should take a primary place in education. "For by its use, not merely will the child learn self-control, not merely will it develop his physical energies and be able to resist disease, but in addition, he will be able to develop (in a degree hardly conceivable by those who have not seen this method applied) his working powers in all fields. He will learn to obtain the maximum of results with a minimum of effort, he will acquire a method which will be a stand-by to him throughout life." That child who is equipped for life with a working knowledge of his own mental machinery is going to have a tremendous advantage from the start of the race. Nothing is ever learned as thoroughly, as quickly or as easily as those things we learn when we are young. The boy aviator learns to adjust himself to the control of his plane and very soon acquires what Baudouin calls "response models"—meaning that certain responses to given circumstances become automatic and re-

quire no conscious mental process to produce them.

And so the child who has been thoroughly grounded in the meaning and use of auto-suggestion will know exactly what to do when danger threatens and he will do it instinctively, with perfect self-mastery. Think what this will mean in the economy of time and energy which might otherwise be spent in floundering panic. The boy who feels despair over his mathematics; the girl who is miserably self-conscious; the child confronted by the thousand and one difficulties that so often make childhood anything but that happy state it is generally supposed to be, will have learned a way out. A surprising number of people will admit, when the question is put to them, that nothing would induce them to live through their youth again. M. Coué insists that we were put into the world to be happy, but how can we expect success in the "pursuit of happiness" if the imagination uncontrolled is to be permitted to lead us into every quagmire by the way.

Certain forms of suggestion that seem to work admirably with grown people are not so well adapted to the needs of children. Adults can

sometimes be dynamited out of a state of mind or a train of thought. Often their delusions have crystallized, as I said before in likening M. Coué to a sculptor, but in dealing with the minds of children we have a material soft as wax, that must be moulded very gently, as every finger print leaves its trace.

Once a woman in a trolley-car was having a fit of hysteria so violent that all the combined efforts of the passengers proved unavailing to calm her. At last the motorman groaned heavily and shut off the power. Shoving his way back into the car he leaned over the afflicted lady, emitting a sudden roar, "Shut up, pie face!" and instantly the hysterics ceased. "That's the way I always fix my wife," he remarked as he returned to his post.

Now, this suggestion of the motorman's, substituting as it did a new and startling idea for the one that was making the trouble, was good of its kind, and perfect for that occasion, but very rarely do children profit by such treatment. Many people hold that the best thing to say to a child when it has received some slight hurt is "That's nothing." This is only one form of auto-

suggestion and it is good in as far as it proves effective.

The cry-baby child needs to be turned away from that fault as from any other, not by jeering at it, not by petting or humouring it, but by picturing the opposite ideals of endurance and self-control. But this should not be carried too far. Too much repression may be dangerous. Nature provides a relief for nervous organizations in tears or outcries, and many doctors are warning parents against too severe a system in this respect. Good sense is required in handling this problem as in most others.

At the same time that you are working to implant standards of courage and cheerfulness, the bearing of small troubles easily, the child can be taught to help more serious hurts by calling upon the unconscious force within him. This will not make a coward of him, but will, on the contrary, help him to bear pain and conquer it, without putting a dangerous strain on his nervous organization. "That's nothing" and *"Ça passe"* can go hand in hand as helpful allies working to accomplish the same end.

Sooner or later we must reckon with the friend

who thinks that "this Coué idea of coddling and generally spoiling babies is something that has long since been discarded from good practice. Babies should be left severely alone." This again is a misconception. Babies, like kittens, should not be handled too much and certainly they should not be spoiled, but if they are let alone it need not be done severely.

No baby should be without the "sense impression," if you like, that its mother is watching over it with loving care. When that is lacking the child misses something that is absolutely essential to its well-being. One of the best known child specialists in the country is in the habit of advising parents to keep their sick children at home, whenever it is possible to do so, rather than to send them to the best equipped of hospitals where every care will be given them, short of the personal attention of the mother herself.

There are also illuminating statistics of child mortality in hospitals where, in spite of every medical and sanitary advantage, the death rate percentage is higher than when babies suffering from the same diseases remain in their homes, even poverty stricken ones, under mother care.

A woman who has been in charge of a celebrated nursery wherein babies are held for adoption tells me that children who in the nursery have seemed unattractive and uninteresting, almost invariably bloom into fascinating cherubs under the loving care and attention of their adopted parents.

Perhaps some friend may have doubts about the Garden Story. She thinks the idea of the lovely Princess too "sentimental." Remember that in telling this story you are making an appeal to the child's imagination, and the "lovely Princess" has held her appointed place in Fairy Stories since time immemorial. If, however, you know of anything else that would appeal more strongly to *your* child's imagination, then by all means make use of that figure instead.

The Garden Story should never become common nor should any child be permitted to get it through simulation of aches or pains.

As to the objection that the method might lead to an exploitation of emotional tendencies, a sentimental dependence between the child and its mother or any one else—that is impossible, unless indeed the teacher is at fault. As a matter

of fact the exact reverse is the case. The teaching, if successful at all, develops in the child, not an emotional dependence upon another person, but a calm and reasonable reliance on its *own* power and on its own ability to control the conditions under which it lives. It produces the most dignified and responsible attitude toward life of which it is possible to conceive.

What does M. Coué mean when he speaks of the "Domain of Possibility"? He himself answers this question by saying that if a leg or an arm has been cut off, it will be impossible to grow another through auto-suggestion. If a bone has been broken, auto-suggestion cannot set it, but after the surgeon has done his work and the bone has been set, the healing and knitting process may be greatly accelerated with the aid of his method.

The parents of a child who is desperately ill, or afflicted, may find themselves wondering whether this particular case is not outside the bounds of the domain.

At the children's clinic a spectator asked Mlle. Kaufmant: "How do you dare to tell that child she is going to get well? How could you ever

face her disappointment, the betrayal of the hopes you have aroused, if she is not cured?" The reply came without an instant's hesitation. "No child's case is ever hopeless when there is a mind to work on. Where there is growth there is constant change going on, and with the aid of auto-suggestion all the vital forces can be rallied to work in the direction of betterment. Everything that is possible will be obtained; one never knows how far the improvement may go, but no child has ever failed to respond. I *know* that this is so, and it is because I know it that my treatment is effective."

There should be no place for misgivings in the mind of the person teaching auto-suggestion. If you fancy it to be impossible to keep out depressing doubts, it is because you have not understood one of the most important principles of the method. No two contrary ideas can occupy the mind at the same time; when one goes in the other must come out.

It is therefore the function of the conscious mind to choose between the two contrary ideas and to elect that one which seems to be the most useful and desirable. By the practice of con-

scious auto-suggestion you can guard your mind against the intrusion of the other idea.

The policies advocated by M. Coué have always been followed more or less instinctively by naturally kindly and sympathetic parents and teachers in dealing with children, but now that we can analyze them in the light of the recent discoveries in the field of auto-suggestion we know that they *must* be followed if trouble is to be avoided.

"He is most firmly good who best knows why."

M. Coué is in the habit of giving to every new patient what he calls the *"expérience."* The patient is instructed to clasp his hands at arm's length from his body, looking at them fixedly and pressing them together with all the force he can command. When the pressure has reached its maximum, he is told to think, "I cannot unclasp my hands. I cannot, I cannot; I want to, but I cannot." This experiment is very simple, although it is frequently misunderstood. The idea is that without the motor thought, "I *can,*" the fingers cannot be relaxed. The thought, "I want to," only produces an effort to tear them apart while the fingers are still firmly clasped.

Many people fancy themselves to be incapable of holding the thought, "I cannot," as directed, and confuse the issue by permitting themselves to think, "Maybe I can," or, "I can if I want to." Others who are highly imaginative and suggestible (it is used as a test of suggestibility) get the idea at once and are greatly impressed by the force of the resulting struggle between the imagination and the will, illustrating the law of reversed effort.

Baudouin and Brooks, writing on the Coué Method, have agreed that another experiment is more suitable for introducing children to the natural law on which the Method is founded—and this is the Chevreul Pendulum. Without a description of it this book would be incomplete.

The experiment is highly amusing, in fact it is only a new kind of game, but it is a game that is of the very greatest importance as a preparation for life. Your children will be fortunate indeed if they can learn the lesson early and in so agreeable a manner. Once they have understood it your task of explaining its many applications will be easy.

The paraphernalia required is of the simplest:

On a sheet of white paper draw a circle about five inches in diameter. Inside the circle, reaching from rim to rim, draw two heavy black lines intersecting in the middle, one perpendicular and the other horizontal. Letter these lines A, B, and C, D. Now tie a piece of thread about eight inches long to a lead pencil or any small light stick, and fasten at the other end a bob, a heavy button will do, a lead dress weight, or a heavy ring. Lay the paper on the table and stand before it, holding your tiny fishing-rod in both hands with your elbows free from your sides. Hold the rod firmly with the bob suspended over the point of intersection, which should be marked with an O. Now look at the line A, B, following it with your eyes, from side to side. Keep your mind dwelling easily on the idea of the line. Presently the bob will begin to move along that line. Your earnest efforts to keep the rod still, to prevent the pendulum from swinging will only increase its motion, by bringing in the law of reversed effort.

After a while transfer your eyes and your thought to the line C, D, and observe the behaviour of the bob. Finally transfer your

whole attention to the circle, following it round and round with your eyes. The bob will do the same. Sometimes the results obtained in the last test are amazing and the bob will whirl around with great speed with a diameter of eight inches or more.

This experiment, like the one mentioned previously, is a test of suggestibility, and the child for whom the bob moves fastest, and with the most ready obedience to the change of thought, is the one who will obtain the most immediate results from the practice of auto-suggestion.

The children should be told that this game illustrates the law of reversed effort, the most valuable of Coué's discoveries, and the root of his teaching. It is because of this law that the imagination leads when there is a contest between it and the will. Holding the rod in the hands and making an *honest* effort to hold it absolutely still, the thought is fixed on the idea of motion along a certain line. As soon as this idea has been accepted by the unconscious mind, it is transformed into auto-suggestion of movement, and the order is transmitted to the muscles governing the arm and hand. Thereafter the effort of the will to

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THE CHEVREUL PENDULUM

arrest the motion of the bob becomes a conflict with the imagination, which by the law of reversed effort produces a movement more and more pronounced. The idea implanted in the imagination controls the functions of the body.

When you are sure that your boy or girl has understood this you can go on to explain how the knowledge of the law is to help them every day in the business of living. If they are sleepless and try to force themselves to sleep, they will only become more and more wide awake and restless. If they have forgotten something and try to force the will to bring the thing back to mind it continues to escape them,—doing the very reverse of what they desire. The conflict, generating a fear of failure, makes failure certain.

There is another consideration that ought not to be passed over. Only the other day I heard a young mother saying:

"I suppose this Coué idea is all very well, but I never could understand philosophy. It balls me all up to read even one of these Bergson books, not to mention Freud. I'm not going to start in on this new thing and come out feeling that I'm all kinds of a fool. That's about all the

suggestion I should get out of it and it wouldn't make life any more enjoyable."

Many people do dislike reading philosophy; it confuses them, or even distresses them, perhaps for the reason this young woman gave, perhaps for another. But nothing could be simpler than Coué or the method he teaches. No doubt there will be plenty of esoteric books written about him or founded upon his discovery, but he himself will never "ball" anybody up. All that he wants understood is the fact that a suggestion conveyed to the unconscious mind will have a direct effect. That the suggestion given to oneself without effort or act of will, at a time of quiet and relaxation, repeated quickly and without conscious thought, will be seized upon by the unconscious mind. That done, the matter is to be dropped. The unconscious mind will attend to the rest; the conscious mind can go about its business.

This is really all any one needs to know. But faith in the method being a part, and an important part of its efficacy, the reason lying behind the formula should be studied in order to give you proper confidence. The relation between will and imagination, the different parts they

play and your power to affect the imagination in the way you wish by presenting to it ideas in simple form and words, these fundamentals are all you need.

In the pages of this book I have outlined a few of the ramifications of induced suggestion and auto-suggestion. It has been shown that their tremendous influence is constantly at work in all our lives and most powerfully and continuously with growing children.

You will see the necessity of surrounding your child in as far as possible with constructive, upbuilding suggestions. From the few examples I have given you will observe the actual harm resulting from suggestions which have never until now been generally recognized as bad.

Never permit yourself to forget that nothing is so fundamentally important in maintaining the general atmosphere of health and happiness you wish to create as M. Coué's famous little formula:

"Every day *in every way* I am getting better and better."

Some people shy at using the suggestion in the words prescribed. For one reason or another

they prefer to invent phrases of their own to be used in the same way. One of my friends had told me that she likes to sing hers to the jolly tune of a nursery rhyme, "The Farmer in the Dell."

"My pain has gone away,
My pain has gone away;
Heigh-ho, the Dairy-oh,
My pain has gone away."

This is an admirable illustration of the mistake of attempting to branch out for oneself and improve on M. Coué's idea. It will be seen that the word "pain," the idea we are trying to get away from, occurs in every line, except the third, and in that the remarks concerning the Dairy are aside from the point we are aiming at.

M. Coué's own words are as concise and easy to say as it is possible to make them and they cover *every* possible condition, both mental and physical; they represent the result of years of intensive practical experimentation. Hundreds of thousands of people have found them beneficial, so why should we bother our heads to try to improve on them?

Whosoever has tried them, will know that by the time he has arrived at the twentieth repetition he is very apt to drop off to sleep, smiling peacefully.

In the morning, when the conscious mind emerges from sleep, if the habit has once been acquired, that same little cheerful self-assurance of well-being and happiness to come will be waiting to enter it, taking precedence over all the annoying thoughts left over from the day before, which would otherwise come crowding in to nag and harass us at the first dawn of consciousness.

Do not imagine, either, that the string with twenty knots may be dispensed with, for by using it you are reinforcing the idea with a sense-impression. It enables you to carry through the twenty repetitions with the minimum of conscious effort of the will.

Therefore give the string to your child and tell him to murmur the words easily, sleepily, letting the knots slip through his fingers. Tell him that he need only say them loud enough so that the inside mind that is listening through his ear can hear them. That inside mind knows far better than he does what needs to be done for better-

ment in every way and it will be ready to carry out the general suggestion to the best advantage. The child's consciousness will thus be predisposed to expect health and good and he will take it for granted that these are customary, almost inevitable.

THE END

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